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W. M. THACKERAY.

THE

NEW SKETCH BOOK:

BEING ESSAYS NOW FIRST COLLECTED FROM
"THE FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW,"

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY

ROBERT S. GARNETT,

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE AUTHORS CRITICISED.

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NOTE.—*Prefixed to the Appendix will be found the full titles of the various works criticised in the Essays.*

INTRODUCTION.

I.

SOME time ago I took up a volume of the *Quarterly Review* for 1836, containing a long notice of novels by Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Balzac, George Sand and others. The reviewer had received "Le Dernier jour d'un Condamné" by Hugo. He finds that there are many blank leaves and open spaces in the volume, and states that he would have liked it better if the printer's ink had not spoiled any of the pages. He considers "Notre Dame de Paris" to resemble Sir Walter Scott's works, as Goose Gibbie in his helmet and buff coat might resemble the noble chivalry of Lord Evandale. He prefers Balzac's "Œuvres de Jeunesse" for the most part to the "Comédie Humaine;" "La Peau de Chagrin" being only worth mentioning for its evidence of the general demoralization of the society described. He stigmatizes another novel as "vulgar stuff;" "Le Père Goriot" as a clumsy tissue of odious exaggeration, and the "Œuvres Philosophiques" as nothing else but demoralizing maxims impersonated in licentious examples, but fortunately so stupid and so obscure that even the curiosity of vice must be blunted at their aspect. With George Sand he deals as follows:—

"We now arrive at an author from a variety of circumstances the most remarkable of all. Not less clever than Balzac, not less wicked than Raymond, George Sand by the union of impassioned rhetoric and

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sensual ideas carries to its most pernicious excess this species of demoralizing novel. But how much is our surprise and disgust increased, when we find that George Sand is a pseudonym, and that these lascivious tales—disgusting enough if written by a *man*, however young or however vicious—are really the production of a *woman*—a lady—a lady if not of rank, at least of title, of *Madame la Baronne du Devant*. . . . The choice of the pseudonym itself is not unimportant, and deserves a passing observation. *George Sand!* A German name can hardly have been chosen at random by a *French* writer. In honour, we believe, or at least in remembrance, of *Sand*, that young German fanatic who in the year 1819 astounded the world with that practical scene of enthusiastic and bloody romance—the assassination of Kotzebue. We have had, and we still have, some conscientious doubts whether we should mention this author at all, but we have been determined to do so by having found *his* works in our London circulating libraries. Whether we shall have sufficient influence to put them into the *Index Expurgatorius* we know not; but at least we may be permitted to mention in *Albemarle Street* what is sold and circulated in *Piccadilly* and *Bond Street*."

It seemed to me that such a virulent attack as this upon writers of the fame and reputation of Hugo, Dumas, Balzac and George Sand would scarcely have remained unchallenged in this country, even in 1836. I was curious to know what was answered on their behalf, and I looked into some other reviews. Naturally I did not omit the *Foreign Quarterly*, and in it I found an article in which the cudgels were gallantly and effectively taken up on behalf of George Sand. From the *Foreign Quarterly* I passed on to Thackeray's *Paris Sketch Book*, in which I remembered to have read an essay entitled "Madame Sand and the New Apocalypse." Having done so I turned to a review in the *Foreign Quarterly* of Sue's novel "Mathilde," which I had not read, but in which a few words about George Sand had caught my eye. I was struck by the resemblance of the observations upon her in this review to those in the *Sketch Book*. I saw that the latter was published in 1840, and that the author stated in his preface that "about half of the sketches in these volumes have already appeared in print in various periodical works." Acting on the hint which seemed to be

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thus given, and on what had struck me in connection with George Sand, I took up another volume of the *Foreign Quarterly*. I soon came across an important article entitled "English History and Character on the French Stage," concerning the authorship of which I could have little hesitation. I was familiar with Thackeray's criticisms in the *Paris Sketch Book* of a couple of Dumas' plays—"Kean" and "Don Juan de Marana," and I could not doubt that I had before me an essay, by the same hand, upon plays of Hugo, Soulié, Dumas, Balzac and others. What struck me most forcibly were the following paragraphs:—

"When we saw announced 'Halifax,' by Alexandre Dumas, here, we said, is Dumas smitten too with the new Scribe fashion, and about to deal with Lord Halifax, as his master has dealt with Lord Bolingbroke. We were mistaken. This Halifax turned out to be a low, fighting, brawling ruffian, who kills or wounds a man *per diem*. It was at the Théâtre des Variétés, where vaudevilles alone are performed, that during the month of December last this comedy of Dumas' was presented, *mêlée de chant*, to bring it within the proper designation. The appearance of Alexandre Dumas, one of the leaders of the romantic school, in the humble walk of vaudeville, excited some curiosity among the literary public of Paris. Was it to be regarded as a specimen of the relaxation and *bonhomie* of a great man, attired in night gown and pantoufles? or the vanity of a versatile genius, determined to conquer in every walk of literature, without leaving a nook untrodden? And the question took divers crowds to see it solved. Now heartily do we wish that Dumas had not intruded his foot within this smiling garden of the vaudeville. He who opened a melodrama with heaven, and the angels, and the Virgin, and an ascending soul (let the doubters of so monstrous a tale refer to 'Don Juan de Marana') had no business with that genuine, sparkling, essentially French thing, the vaudeville.

"As no capital in Europe contains any class resembling the *grisette*, so is the vaudeville exclusively Parisian. How the dialogue, studded with song, runs on like a merry stream, broken every moment by apparent obstacles, which only serve to make it musical! The classic drama may pale before the romantic, and the romantic, after assuming a thousand extravagant shapes, may go down in brimstone and red and blue lights; but the vaudeville will mount up, light as a champagne bubble, coloured with the gay rays of wit and animal spirits, and immortal as France, its own sunny land. Oh! Scribe, why did'st thou

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abandon so happy a realm, where thou wert supreme, to take to history and politics, and the legitimate five-act comedy forsooth, where thou art last among the great? Better dost thou think it, to serve at the feet of Molière's statue, than to reign in a paradise of repartee and chansonette? See how Dumas steals in and occupies the vacant ground! And how does he signalize his seizure of your charming little Marquesas? Why, by a fatal duel. Blood upon the boards of the Variétés!! Oh! Come back, Scribe, and wash out the foul stains with a flood of repartee!"

Who after reading "French Dramas and Melodramas" in the *Sketch Book* could question that Thackeray wrote this?

The next article which I identified as by Thackeray was, I think, one upon Georg Herwegh's Poems. Before long I had reviews of books by Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas and Frédéric Soulié to add to my list, and some delightfully humorous and characteristic articles on "The German in England," "Angleterre," &c., &c. I was greatly surprised, having supposed that every scrap of Thackeray's work had been already gathered up and reprinted; yet here in an important review were several long articles showing on every page evident trace of Thackeray's individuality, while no mention of these was to be found in a bibliography of his works which lay at hand. I made enquiries for a set of the review. This was long in coming; but when it did arrive I asked the opinion of an expert in Thackerayana. He pounced on the volumes, devoured the articles which I pointed out, and returned them with the advice "Publish them." It appeared that although many articles from *Fraser's Magazine* (for which Thackeray wrote extensively) and elsewhere had been collected, not a single one* had been gleaned from the *Foreign Quarterly*,

* NOTE.—Since the above was written I find that Mr. Lewis Melville, on the indication of a correspondent, has reprinted an essay on Dumas' "Excursions sur les bords du Rhin" in the Macmillan edition of Thackeray's works. This essay has therefore been omitted from the present volume.

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and that in none of the biographies was there an allusion to his having written for it.

II.

It becomes interesting to enquire when and under what circumstances Thackeray began to write for the *Review*?

William Makepeace Thackeray, born in 1811, was educated at the Charterhouse School, and at seventeen went to Cambridge, leaving two years later without a degree. His first visit to Paris was a stolen one, made in his college days, when he was nineteen. On leaving Cambridge shortly afterwards he went to Weimar. There he attended various court ceremonies as well as balls and dinners. Those guests who had uniforms wore them; those who had not improvised wonderful attire. Thackeray seems to glance at his life at Weimar and Paris in the essay here reprinted on "The German in England." He writes: "We need only purchase a fancy volunteer's uniform from some fashionable tailor in Holywell Street, and may in our turn figure in foreign courts, dancing quadrilles with the last duchesses at the Tuileries or eating sauer-kraut by the side of German counts and dukes of thirty descents." At Weimar Thackeray's taste for art developed very much, and after visiting Rome he settled in Paris, where he was often to be seen in the Louvre copying pictures.

His first literary work is believed to have been done for *Fraser's Magazine* as early as 1832, when he was living for a short time with his mother in London; but he was better known in Paris in the Latin Quarter, and he seems to refer to his experiences there in "The Adventures of Philip." He writes thus:—

"That period, Philip vows, was the happiest of his life. He liked to tell in after days of the choice acquaintance of Bohemians which he had formed. Their jug, he said, though it contained but small beer was always full. Their tobacco, though it bore no higher rank than

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that of caporal, was plentiful and fragrant. He knew some admirable medical students; some artists, who only wanted talent and industry to be at the height of their profession; and one or two of the magnates of his own calling, the newspaper correspondents, whose houses and tables were open to him. It was wonderful what secrets of politics he learned and transmitted to his own paper. He pursued French statesmen of those days with prodigious eloquence and vigour. At the expense of that old king he was wonderfully witty and sarcastical."

In 1833 Thackeray became financially interested in a critical journal called *The National Standard*. A caricature-portrait of Louis Philippe, which appeared in the number for May 4th, 1833, seems to be his first contribution. In June he went to Paris as foreign correspondent. *The National Standard*, however, failed to please the public, and its last number is dated February 1st, 1834. Thackeray, who began life with a private fortune of about £20,000, no doubt lost money in this venture. In 1836 he issued a folio of drawings called "Flore et Zephyr, Ballet Mythologique," by Théophile Wagstaff. By this time he was slowly becoming known. Maclise's picture of the contributors to *Fraser*, dated January, 1835, had included Thackeray, though it was not until January, 1838, that the first "Yellowplush Paper" appeared in it. In the meantime he helped to float the Company which was responsible for the *Constitutional*, went as its correspondent to Paris and married there. His salary seems to have been £400 a year, but was probably not paid for longer than six months. By July, 1837, the paper had failed, and Thackeray, who had already lost much money in various ways—loans to friends seem to have formed an important item—became a poor man.

At this time he was living in Great Coram Street, Russell Square, or, if the house was not actually taken on his marriage, he soon after came to live there. His eldest daughter, Mrs. Ritchie, speaking of Great Coram Street, says:—"In those days my father was working for the *Times* and the *Morning Chronicle* and for *Cruikshank's Annual* and for *Bentley*, for *Fraser*, and other periodicals." His best work was sent to *Fraser*.

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By 1840 three daughters had been born—the first became Mrs. Ritchie, the second Mrs. Leslie Stephen, the third died in infancy. It was then that Mrs. Thackeray's health gave way, the result being that she had to be placed under medical care. The home had to be broken up; and, in the same year, Thackeray appears to have taken the two little girls to his mother in Paris. He kept the Great Coram Street house for some time longer, perhaps until 1842; moving afterwards to bachelor quarters in St. James' Street. By 1842, therefore, Thackeray had been in Paris as correspondent to two London journals; he had written "Elizabeth Brownrigge," "The Yellowplush Papers," "Catherine," "A Shabby Genteel Story," and "The Great Hoggarty Diamond," all for *Fraser*; "Some Passages in the Life of Major Gahagan" and "The Bedford Row Conspiracy" for the *New Monthly*; the whole of the *Paris Sketch Book*; and "Barber Cox," for the *Comic Almanack*; he had reviewed for the *Times* and extensively for the *Morning Chronicle* and was beginning to write for *Punch*. In the same year we find him working for Chapman & Hall. In April appeared his first contribution to their review, *The Foreign Quarterly*. In June he went to Dublin to write the *Irish Sketch Book*, which Chapman & Hall published in 1843. It seems apparent to me that the *Paris Sketch Book* had attracted the attention of the Editor of the *Foreign Quarterly*. The *Review* had just passed into the hands of Messrs. Chapman & Hall, who issued the following advertisement, the last paragraph of which, I think, points to the fact that the editor had already secured Thackeray's services* :—

"The Publishers, in announcing a change in the editorship of the FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW, invite attention to some features in the

* I am not sure whether the advertisement was issued with the April or with the July number. Thackeray's first contribution that I have been able to identify appeared in the former number.

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present number, the object of which has been to realize, more completely than heretofore, advantages originally proposed by the establishment of this journal. . . . But the chief endeavour in the new management of the *REVIEW* will be to give an *English interest* to its treatment of general foreign literature, and on every possible occasion to introduce into its pages that popular character, wherein, notwithstanding high literary claims and acknowledged services since the period of its establishment, the *FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW* has been always felt to be defective."

The *Review* was started in 1827 by Messrs. Treuttel & Würtz, a large foreign bookselling house, the first editor being Mr. R. P. Gillies and the second Mr. Cochrane. This gentleman, afterwards librarian to the London Library, was the active manager of Messrs. Treuttel & Würtz. Their business passed to Adolphus Richter & Co., and the name of Black & Armstrong began to be associated with this firm in the publication of the *Review* in 1836, when it passed into the hands of Messrs. Black & Armstrong. In 1841 the copyright and stock of the *Review* were acquired by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

Thackeray, who knew Paris as well or better than London, was full of its authors and dramatists. When dining with Charles Lever and a party of Irishmen in Dublin (in June, 1842) French authors of the day were discussed—Dumas, Alphonse Karr, Balzac, and George Sand especially, and after criticizing the French stage with some severity, Thackeray delighted his audience with a burlesque reproduction of a certain scene from a popular drama. This scene was chronicled by a Major D., who had never heard of Thackeray before, but who wrote an account of what took place. It is interesting to observe that the Major's description of Thackeray's impromptu performance* agrees exactly with his own account in the

* "Thackeray criticized the French theatre very sharply and came out with a strong bit of humorous representation, which convulsed us with laughter. It had reference to some drama, or opera, I forget what, in which the principal male character comes on the stage with a pirouette and waving his hand in a majestic manner to a chorus, representing Jews in exile in Babylon, says '*Chantez nous une chanson de Jérusalem.*'"

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Paris Sketch Book and elsewhere of the scene in the play from which he took it.

III.

We thus see that Thackeray was keenly interested in the very topics which were first treated (and with a Thackerayan pen) in the *Foreign Quarterly* at the time of the issue of Chapman & Hall's advertisement; at the time, that is, when the editor had already secured him, or was searching for just such a writer. We come now to a stronger point. In April, 1842, there appeared in the *Foreign Quarterly* an article upon Victor Hugo's "Letters from the Rhine." In 1842 Thackeray wrote to Edward FitzGerald that he had read no good books or novels worth mentioning, but scores of volumes of history, and by way of amusement Victor Hugo's new book on the Rhine. "He is very great and writes like a God Almighty," continues Thackeray, and he explains that he has been trying to write about Hugo's letters that day, only squeezing out one page. A remark of Hugo's about looking at the stars—that night is as it were the normal colour of heaven—struck him, and he says that to him there is something awful in it, and that he is certain that time and space are dark blue.

The tone of the letter and of the review are so strikingly similar as to admit no doubt of the identity of the writer.

Thackeray rose from his seat and did the thing, pirouette and all, most inimitably." ("Life of Thackeray," by Herman Merivale and Frank T. Marzials, chap. 8, p. 119.) Compare with the following passage:—"In the 'Festin de Balthazar' we are introduced to Daniel, and the first scene is laid by the waters of Babylon, where a certain number of captive Jews is seated in melancholy postures; a Babylonian officer enters, exclaiming, 'Chantez nous quelques chansons de Jérusalem,' and the request is refused in the language of the Psalms." (*Paris Sketch Book*, "French Dramas and Melodramas.")

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"He is very great and writes like a God Almighty," says the letter writer: and on the first page of the review—that page which Thackeray squeezed out so laboriously—we find him parodying Victor Hugo, who *is* very great; and on the third page he shows him posed precisely as a divinity. And a little further on we find him quoting and admiring—with a touch of generosity which is charming in the contrast—a passage of description of the night sky, such another passage as that which had so moved Edward FitzGerald's correspondent. But what about the other essays? says the reader. I will deal with them in the order in which they appeared and are here re-printed.

The next paper, "The German in England," reveals Thackeray in every line. His reference to his enemy, Mr. N. P. Willis, and his friend Mr. Samuel Rogers, neither of whom he can resist bringing in, and his allusion to his review of Victor Hugo's "Rhine" in the preceding number of the *Review*, are not needed to assist in the identification of an article which is so unmistakably his work.

The paper on Dumas' "Celebrated Crimes" is written with more restraint than is common with Thackeray, but the authorship of the opening pages presents no difficulty to the attentive reader, particularly if he be familiar with the *Paris Sketch Book*. Thackeray finds the "Crimes" highly interesting, but he reproaches their author with dwelling unnecessarily on "the horrors and indecencies of history." Shortly after the appearance of the paper in the *Foreign Quarterly* its publishers issued an expurgated translation of the "Crimes." The next essay—that on Gutzkow's "Letters from Paris,"—seems to me to have been revised and enlarged after it left Thackeray's desk, probably by the editor of the *Review*. The first paragraph with its references to Prince Puckler Muskau, Heine and Paul Pry is Thackerayan, but not so the glances at Guizot, Cousin and Villemain in 1822, which indeed do not fit over well, and read like an interpolation. The description, however, of

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Thiers, which immediately follows, seems to be exactly in Thackeray's style. Let the reader judge.

"As to Thiers, his eloquence is unlike anything that ever existed, or was ever imagined. Fancy a bronze statuette, gifted with the power of motion and the power of speech. If cracked, so much the better; the tingling sounds which it may be supposed to emit will only be the truer. His features are as unmoved, as much bronze as those of the statuette. Dantan could make a Thiers in three hours—if any one else would but find the organs, the senses and the intellect. The first time this statuette gets up to speak, or to squeak, there is a universal desire to put him down with a universal laugh. But the little Punch is not to be put down. He fixes his spectacles (his eyes not being visible) upon his audience. He addresses them in a *how d'ye do* vein of eloquence and soon captivates their attention, just as if he had taken each person present by the button-hole. There is no warmth, no apostrophe, no rhetoric, no figure of speech, no bathos, no pathos, but a wonderful tumbling forth of ideas, as if they came from a *cornucopia*, and that without any effort, any aim at originality, any desire to excite surprise. It is sensible and cold eloquence of most unassuming and irresistible superiority. In his own home, and from one of his own armchairs, it is the same, except that he blends the genuine French *esprit* with his natural quiet oratory. In a word, Thiers is the most wonderful man in Europe."

Towards the end of the essay the writer indulges in a little outburst:—

"Gutzkow says that he is indiscreet, that he is not of the Talleyrand school, that he betrays his sentiments, and so forth. It is merely evident from this that Herr Gutzkow is an honest Hamburger, whose worldly sagacity, as Ruge says of him, must have been developed in the raw cotton of that trading city. Louis Philippe indiscreet! Louis Philippe betray his sentiments! God help the simple German! Another month spent in Paris would have convinced him that truth and indiscretion were qualities quite unknown in the political latitude which he pretends to describe."

We may be sure that there is none of the editor's blue pencil here.

The notice of an English translation of Janin's "American in Paris" must also be by Thackeray, whose dislike for the author of "The Dead Ass and the Guillotined Woman" is so well known and was so frequently manifested.

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'The review of Georg Herwegh's poems is another indisputable Thackeray. The quotation of a sentence or two from it will probably convince everybody.

"But it is absurd to place this young man forward as a master. His poetry is a convulsion, not an effort of strength; he does not sing, but he roars; his dislike amounts to fury; and we must confess that it seems to us, in many instances, that his hatred and heroism are quite factitious, and that his enthusiasm has a very calculating look with it. Fury, to be effective either in life or in print, should, surely, only be occasional. People become quite indifferent to wrath which is roaring and exploding all day, as gunners go to sleep upon batteries. Think of the prodigious number of appeals to arms that our young poet has made in the course of these pages; what a waving and clatter of flashing thoughts; what a loading and firing of double-barrelled words; and, when the smoke rolls off, nobody killed! And a great mercy it is too for that cause of liberty which, no doubt, the young man has at heart, that the working out of it is not intrusted to persons of his flighty temperament. No man was made to be hated; no doctrines of peace and goodwill can be very satisfactorily advocated by violence and murder; nor can good come out of evil, as is taught in those old-fashioned 'temples' which our young bard says he cannot frequent. Is he much better or happier where he is?

"But the wonder is, what could the public want with a half-score of editions of his works? If we were disposed to take an angry or misanthropical turn, the anger should vent itself, not so much on the young man as on the large portion of the human race which has encouraged him by purchasing his poems. Will they encourage him equally when he does something infinitely better? The blessed chance lies entirely open to both parties."

I feel less sure about the article upon Balzac's "*Mono-graphie de la Presse Parisienne*." The allusions to Janin point indeed to Thackeray, and I am assured by a good authority that the observations upon the wood-cut illustrations could have been written by no one else. Of this let the reader judge :—

"Observe the agitated frenzy of M. Pierre Leroux, with divorce, dissolution, disruption, George Sandism, in every part of his aspect and attire; hair, nose, mouth and dressing-gown; to say nothing of the awful chasm which yawns between the waistcoat and the portion of dress which may not be named. Contrast it with the sleek satisfaction

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of M. Hyppolite Lucas, who in the garb of an 'épiciér' is mildly serving out inexhaustible lees of sugar; a thing he is currently said to do to every author *excepting M. de Balzac*. Turn from the stolid, innocent looking, antediluvian figure which does nothing but praise the past (M. Gustave Planche) to the snarling, snapping, bearded poodle which only bites and walks on its hind legs! &c., &c."

I have decided finally to include the article, hoping that something may be found in it which will enable it to be unreservedly accepted as Thackeray's or as freely rejected. It may be observed that its author, whoever he may be, finds translation of Janin's criticism in the *Journal des Débats* quite out of the question, just as Thackeray finds it impossible to translate Janin's quips and cranks in "The American in Paris." It will be singular should this article, or at all events the portion dealing with the illustrations, prove not to be Thackeray's.

That the review of a number of French plays which follows is by Thackeray has already been demonstrated by the citation of the passage upon Alexandre Dumas. No better proof could be given, but admirers of "Esmond" will perhaps be as readily convinced by the long notice of Soulié's play of the days of Queen Anne.

The next essay—that upon Sue's "Mysteries of Paris"—opens with so delightful a specimen of the Thackerayan humour that I need adduce no argument in favour of its title to appear here.

"The royal personages who figure in the Scott romances are among the most charming, if not real, of the characters which the delightful novelist has introduced to us. He was, if we mistake not, the first romantic author who dealt with kings and princes familiarly. Charles and Louis are made to laugh before us as unconcernedly as schoolboys; Richard takes his share of canary out of the cup of Friar Tuck; and the last words we hear from James are, that the cockaleeky is growing cold. What is it that pleases us in the contemplation of these royal people so employed? Why are we more amused with the notion of a king on the broad grin, than with the hilariousness of a commoner? That mingling of grandeur and simplicity, that ticklish conjunction of awe and frivolity, are wonderfully agreeable to the reader; and we are all charmed to know how heroes appear in the eyes of their valets de chambre."

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Nor can there be any doubt about the authorship of the following paper, the notice of Soulié's "Bananier." After alluding to the six columns of feuilletons in the French journals filled by Sue, Dumas, Reybaud, Madame Gay, &c., &c., Thackeray proceeds :

"A part of this astonishing luxury of composition on the part of the famous authors, is accounted for, however, in the following way. The public demand upon them is so immense, that the authors, great as their talents may be, are not able to supply it, and are compelled to take other less famous writers into their pay. And as the famous wine merchants at Frankfort who purchased the Johannisberg vintage of 1811, have been selling it ever since, by simply mixing a very little of the wine of that famous year with an immense quantity of more modern liquor ; so do these great writers employ smaller scribes, whose works they amend and prepare for press. Soulié and Dumas can thus give the Soulié or Dumas flavour to any article of tolerable strength in itself ; and so prepared, it is sent into the world with the Soulié or Dumas seal and signature, and eagerly bought and swallowed by the public as genuine. The retailers are quite aware of the mixture, of which indeed the authors make no secret ; but if the public must have Johannisberg of 1811 and no other, of course the dealers will supply it, and hence the vast quantity of the article in the market. Have we not seen in the same way how, to meet the demands of devotion, the relics of the saints have multiplied themselves ; how Shakespeare's mulberry-tree has been cut down in whole forests, and planed and carved by regiments of turners and upholsterers ; and how, in the plains of Waterloo, crosses, eagles, and grapeshot are still endlessly growing ?

"We are not sufficient connoisseurs in Soulié to say whether the novel before us is of the real original produce, or whether it has simply been flavoured, like the Johannisberger *achtzehnhundertelster* before mentioned. "The Bananier" may be entirely original ; or, like many of Rubens's originals, a work of a pupil with a few touches of the master. The story is cleverly put together, the style is very like the real Soulié ; and seeing the author's signature, of course we are bound to credit. The tale has been manufactured, we take it, not merely for a literary, but also for a political purpose. There is a colonial-slavery party in France ; and the book before us is written to show the beauties of slavery in the French colonies, and the infernal intrigues of the English there and in the Spanish islands, in order to overthrow the present excellent state of things. The subjects are two fine themes for a romantic writer. To paint negro slavery as a happy condition of being ; to invent fictions for the purpose of inculcating hatred and ill-will ; are

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noble tasks for the man of genius. We heartily congratulate Monsieur Soulié upon his appearance as a writer of political fictions."

I come now to an important essay which I suppose no one who knows Thackeray's Lectures on the English Humorists could mistake for the work of any other writer. I cite the opening paragraphs :

"Of the myriads of books now yearly appearing which time shall swallow up, so that they or their memory be no more seen, we hope this little work of Madame de Girardin's will not be one. Not that it is more innocent or intrinsically worthy of life than many others of its companions which will be handed over to the inevitable Destroyer ; but it deserves to have a corner in a historical library, where even much more natural and meritorious publications might be excluded ; just as a two-headed child will get a place in a museum-bottle, when an ordinary creature, with the usual complement of skull, will only go the way the sexton shows it. The 'Lettres Parisiennes' give a strange picture of a society, of an age, and of an individual. One or the other Madame Girardin exposes with admirable unconscious satire ; and this is satire of the best and wholesomest sort. One is apt to suspect the moralist whose indignation makes his verse or points his wit ; one cannot tell how much of personal pique mars the truth of his descriptions, or how many vices or passions are painted after the happy ever-present model himself ; and while we read Swift's satires of a sordid, brutal, and wicked age, or Churchill's truculent descriptions of the daring profligates of his time, we know the first to be black-hearted, wicked, and envious, as any monster he represents, and have good reason to suspect the latter to be the dissolute ruffian whom he describes as characteristic of his times.

"But the world *could* never be what the dean painted as he looked at it with his furious, mad, glaring eyes ; nor was it the wild drunken place which Churchill, reeling from a tavern, fancied he saw reeling round about him. We might as well take the word of a sot, who sees four candles on the table when the sober man can only perceive two ; or of a madman who peoples a room with devils that are quite invisible to the doctor."

Compare this, reader, with the following words from the lecture on Swift in the "English Humorists" :

"What had this man [*i.e.*, Swift] done? What secret remorse was rankling at his heart? What fever was boiling in him, that he should see all the world blood-shot? We view the world with our own eyes,

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each of us ; and we make from within us the world we see. A weary heart gets no gladness out of sunshine ; a selfish man is sceptical about friendship, as a man with no ear doesn't care for music. A frightful self-consciousness it must have been, which looked on mankind so darkly through those keen eyes of Swift."

This should be sufficient proof ; but any lingering doubt must vanish when the notice of Grant's "Paris and its People," with which the essay closes, is read. Thackeray quotes the remarks of the *Morning Herald* twice over, for they appear in one of his identified contributions to *Punch*, as well as in this essay.

I am now just at the end of my rapid survey of the essays which I have gathered together. The last one is a scathing notice of a preposterous book on England by Alfred Michiels. Were it desired to choose a representative article by Thackeray for a volume of essays by nineteenth century authors, I believe that none more thoroughly typical of his mature talent could be found. Its severity surpasses anything written by him upon James Grant, Jules Janin, or N. P. Willis, and the only article with which it can well be compared is the famous one upon "Thunder and Small Beer" which forms a preface to the second edition of "The Kickleburys on the Rhine."

IV.

In the vague language of Chapman & Hall's advertisement, the *Foreign Quarterly* in the hands of its former owners had failed "to give an English interest to the treatment of general foreign literature." In other words, it had failed to interest the English reader in French literature, which necessarily supplied the bulk of its contents. About 1841 there was a recrudescence of ill-feeling betwixt Great Britain and France. Neither country, therefore, was precisely in the mood to hail as a genius any person standing on the other shore ; indeed, mutual jealousy, suspicion, and uneasiness had aroused on both sides a disposition to depreciate the talent of the foreigner.

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In Paris Dickens was chiefly known by the stage travesty of "Oliver Twist," which Thackeray witnessed and wrote about in 1842. In London the works of Hugo, Balzac, and George Sand were denounced as immoral by people who enjoyed more or less secretly the works of Paul de Kock. Greatly would it have mortified such critics to be told that French readers of taste considered "Mon voisin Raymond" and the rest *banal* and vulgar. Londoners who knew through the medium of the newspapers that the hero of Dumas' notorious play "Antony" was supposed to be a portrait of himself, were shocked to read that on the appearance of its author, the handsome quadron, at a Parisian concert-hall, the whole audience rose as if he had been a king. Parisians read translations of G. W. M. Reynolds' novels, and thought them singular, but more refined than the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and his friends. Clearly there was the greatest need of a new series of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, conducted on more popular if less scholarly lines. The new editor had an opportunity greater even than this. He had the opportunity of substituting the cosmopolitan for the insular point of view. Did he mean to do so when he looked around him and chose Thackeray?

Of Thackeray's qualifications he must have been well aware. Did he know of his limitations? Did he know that, in spite of his familiarity with the continent, his hearty liking for life in Paris and in the Latin Quarter especially, and his considerable knowledge of current French literature and drama, that he was by no means without insular prejudices? The editor must have known this if he had read, as he surely had, the *Paris Sketch Book*.

It was not, perhaps, the cosmopolitan critic whom the publishers wanted. The *Review* must if possible be made to pay, and in England, if not on the continent, a sturdy Briton's views were the most acceptable. Thackeray set to work. He first took a book by Hugo, next one by Dumas, later one by Soulié, and the result, though very entertaining, was not so

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much to throw any special illumination on those authors as to exhibit their effect upon a highly intelligent Briton. An open-minded foreigner, anxious to study our national characteristics and temperament, could scarcely do better than read the essays. The sturdy devotion to his own scheme of morals, the honesty and singleness of purpose, the forceful condemnation and vigour of satire exhibited when occasion demands, and the broad and simple distinction between right and wrong, are all typically English as they are typically Thackeray. And even more nationally characteristic is a sort of puzzled, hesitating note of aversion as of one who says, "It may be all very well, but I don't understand it, and I don't like it."

Thackeray, then, was no ideal critic of the new school of French fiction, or even of miscellaneous books by romanticists. Certainly it was from no impulse born of his pen that shortly after he commenced to write in the *Foreign Quarterly* translations of French novels swarmed forth in this country. Thackeray represented only too well the opinions of the influential critics, and the consequence was that the leading publishers, except in a few instances, did not venture to bring out the new French novels. It was the obscure ones who were sufficiently daring, and they, aiming at large sales rather than the praise of the critics, issued poor translations at a low price, ill written, ill printed and ill bound. Had the reviewers been clearer-sighted and given more encouragement, a better class of readers would have been reached; and Leech's cut in *Punch* of two dustmen discussing the respective merits of Eugène Sue and Alexandre Dumas would not have suggested itself to him.

Fortunately, Thackeray's remarkable talents were not restricted to reviews of books by members of the French Romantic School. Georg Herwegh, a poet of "young Germany"; James Grant, the frothy and curiously blundering author of a book about Paris; Alfred Michiels, a versatile and amusing hack writer who produced an extraordinary work on *perfidie Albion*;

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Charles Gutzkow, another "young German"; an anonymous naturalist, a visitor to these shores, who succeeded in delighting our critic; the entertaining "Vicomte de Launay," whose Letters in *la Presse* were one of the amenities of a residence in Paris; and other authors, besides a string of dramatists, successively engaged his pen. Furthermore, he showed his powers as a translator, rendering several of Herwegh's poems and a lengthy passage from the "Mysteries of Paris" most successfully.

That Thackeray's earlier work lacks the rhythmic flow, the easy euphonious balance of his later work, will be expected, and may have been already noticed by careful readers of the two passages on Swift which I have quoted. But his style, then very good, was never to change; it was only to be perfected—perfected, as one feels, by much reading of eighteenth century writers. Addison's and Fielding's works were continually in his hands, and Thackeray alone among modern writers learnt their methods and caught the secret of their graces.

These essays of his, we may be sure, were the result of much thought and labour. Thackeray, always a slow writer, was much better suited to be a Quarterly Reviewer than a daily or a weekly critic. Certainly he gave the best that was in him to give in his endeavours to increase the popularity of the *Foreign Quarterly*.

I cannot help regretting that so many friends and admirers of Thackeray have passed away without reading these unsigned Essays. How some of them would have delighted, for instance, Dr. John Brown, who particularly loved his early work! I can picture the Doctor gloating over the following passage from the review of Sue's "Mysteries of Paris":—

"It will be seen, then, that contrast and action are the merits of this novel. It is a work indeed of no slight muscular force. Murder and innocence have each other by the throat incessantly, and are plunging, and shrieking and writhing, through the numberless volumes. Now crime is throttling virtue, and now again virtue has the uppermost, and

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points her bright dagger at the heart of crime. It is that exciting contest between the white-robed angel of good, and the black principle of evil, which, as children, we have seen awfully delineated in the galanty-show, under the personifications of the devil and the baker. And the subject *is* interesting, let us say what we will: if galanty-shows are now what they were some scores of years since, that is: still is it a stirring and exciting theme. Sometimes it is the devil who disappears conquered, out of the shining disk, leaving the baker victorious: sometimes it is the baker, who is hurled vanquished into the universal blackness, leaving the fiend to shout his hideous song of triumph. Last Christmas, no doubt, many hundred children sat in dark drawing-rooms, and witnessed that allegorical combat, and clapped hands for the baker, their favourite: and looked wistfully at each other when the fight was over, and the whole room was awful and dark."

Is not this the true Thackeray, and in reading it do we not seem to be listening to the voice of a departed friend?

ROBERT S. GARNETT.

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THE RHINE.

By VICTOR HUGO.

It has been rather the fashion of late in France for the poet to take upon himself the profession of statesman in addition to his own peculiar one ; as any body knows who has read the memoirs of the Vicomte de Chateaubriand, or the speeches which M. de Lamartine is continually in the habit of delivering in the Chamber of Deputies.

And, as might be expected from persons of their genius, it is not on subjects of mean detail or dry domestic economy, that they waste what the French papers call their *parole riche et puissante*, but they look to vaster themes on which their eloquence may dissert, and especially delight to speak on questions of foreign policy. On Turkey, on Poland, on the designs of Russia, on the noble and touching reminiscences which make Greece a sacred country ; on Spain, storm-stricken endeavouring to right itself in the tempest ; on Egypt and Palestine, especially, this sort of statesmen love to discourse : when such countries are in distress they *font entendre* words of sympathy and consolation, and no doubt the countries so apostrophized must be very much flattered and relieved by thinking

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that René has a word in their favour, and Jocelyn a tearful eye fixed upon them.

The above-named nations being patronised by MM. de Lamartine and Chateaubriand, crowded as it were already, Monsieur Victor Hugo has looked to other lands where his vast genius might find room to reign, and has discovered the River Rhine. Over this large and fertile district, from Cologne to Strasburg (nay possibly on the Dutch banks too, for why should anything less than the ocean stop him?), Victor Hugo, then, has established his sway, and he has chosen his ground with some adroitness too, for it is clear that the other two *Rois de la Pensée*, Lamartine and Chateaubriand before mentioned, can have no business in this territory, which both, in their quality of legitimate statesmen, have consented to sign away. It is all Victor Hugo's, he may do with it as he likes. He looks at it from some towering pinnacle of thought, and says—It is a fair country and good to conquer—it has stately towns and castles, meadows and goodly vineyards, the people look happy, but they are not—I see they are not—they are pining to become Frenchmen,—I will go among them and conquer them, with the mild sword of genius I will penetrate them. I will appear before their strong places, and by blowing a little on my trumpet, behold! their walls shall fall down: I will ride into my cities preceded by loud-shouting metaphors clad in rich attire and scattering smiles for largesse among the people. If they must rebel I will hammer them down with historic facts, and crush them with such battering-rams of argument, that they must needs fall down and obey! And so he has gone and taken possession of the Rhine, the two volumes of *Lettres à un Ami* are like bulletins of the campaign, and a strange production at the close of them entitled “Conclusion,” may be likened to a huge windy castle in the air, which he has erected and garrisoned, and which commands the conquered country.

It must be confessed that our lively neighbours across the channel are not chary of their praises to one another, and if we

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have occasion to wonder sometimes at the extraordinary opinion which M. Hugo entertains of himself, at least there are others who profess a still higher admiration of him. "During three days," writes one critic of the book, "three days of solitude and retirement he has been living and thinking in Victor Hugo's new work. Three days is but little time to understand it, not enough to appreciate it. And the article he publishes must not be considered as an account of the book, still less, *grand Dieu!* as a criticism, but simply as a first impression rapid but profound, felt rather than reasoned, of a journey made into a magnificent nature, into a fruitful history, into a noble poetry."

The literal translation of such fine words is always unfortunate in English, where words are used with somewhat more precision, and where such sounding phrases as *une magnifique nature*, *une noble poésie*, *une féconde histoire*, appear very bald indeed. Perhaps it would be a good precaution for imaginative writers to take in general, and whenever they have produced a sentence peculiarly dignified and sonorous, to try how it would look in another language, and whether the sense will still bear the transplantation. But our purpose here is not to instruct authors, so much as to apologize for not being able to render their thoughts properly. Both M. Hugo and his critics must suffer very greatly at the hands of a translator who has no means of expressing many of their beauties. The critic says that Hugo is one of the glories of the age, and that the age itself is so glorious that he wonders people do not glory in belonging to it, and nobly asks "Why one has not one's country in time as in space, why one is not a contemporary as one is a concitoyen?" Indeed there is no reason, and why not add to one's harmless sum of pleasures by being proud of one's century, or anything else?

"As for M. Hugo," continues the critic, "his works are *the great street* [again the powers of translation fail]—the great street, which traverses the ideas, the interests, and the passions of our age. Henceforth we shall await with impatience, and

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receive with gratitude, every one of the manifestations of his thoughts. * * * Let us speak of the Rhine at our ease, with faith and with joy; let us descend this royal river, this sovereign intellect. But how to begin!—how to recall all our reminiscences, sad or charming, smiling or severe! Shall we follow the thinker, the artist, or the archæologist?—for the Rhine has a triple aspect: it is true, it is beautiful, it is useful. It goes from the past to the present; from the present to the future: it relates, it recalls, and it divines. Science in it translates itself into poetry—poetry into prophecy: history comments nature; and nature stammers *destiny*. Very often, when people have talked before us of *Nôtre Dame*, it has been asked, ‘Which *Nôtre Dame*—the poet’s or the architect’s?’ Now, when friends of an evening talk to each other about the Rhine, it will be said, ‘Which Rhine—THAT OF THE POET, OR THAT OF GOD?’ ”

We have, then, two volumes of new revelation; neither more nor less. M. Hugo is a poet, a prophet, a divinity, according to the critic’s opinion; and indeed, to judge him by his own, his critic is not very far wrong. A poet, *cela va sans dire*—a prophet he has been three or four times; and if not a divinity as yet, he has certainly a divine mission, and a series of qualities that are pretty nigh celestial. He says of himself and book,

“Some years since, a writer—he who pens these lines—was travelling for no other purpose, than to see the trees and the sky, two things that one cannot see at Paris.

“This was his only object, as those of his readers will acknowledge who may please to look through the first pages of his first volume.

“Wandering thus, on chance, as it were, he arrived on the banks of the Rhine.

“The sight of this grand river produced on him an effect with which as yet, no other incident of his journey had inspired him—a wish to see and to observe for a fixed purpose: it settled the wandering train of his ideas, impressed almost a certainty of signification to an excursion which at first had been but capricious, gave a centre to his studies; made him pass, in a word, from reverie to thought.

“The Rhine is the river of which every one speaks, and which no

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one studies ; which every one visits and no one knows ; which one sees in passing, and forgets as one travels on ; which every eye has looked upon, and no intellect as yet has sounded. And yet its ruins afford food to imagination, and its destinies to serious reflection ; and to the eye of the poet, as to the eye of the publicist, this admirable river, under the transparence of its water, gives glimpses both of the future and the past.

“ Under this double aspect, the writer could not resist the temptation of examining the Rhine. To contemplate the past in monuments fast dying away—to calculate the future in the probable results of facts at present existing, was pleasant to his instinct as an antiquary, and his instinct as a dreamer. Besides, one day infallibly, perhaps very soon, the Rhine will be the great question of Europe. Why not look beforehand a little, and turn one’s attention to the point ? Even supposing that for the moment one were occupied with studies not less lofty or fruitful, but fair as regarded space and time, one must nevertheless accept, where they present themselves, certain severe tasks of the brain. If he but live in one of the decisive epochs of civilization, the mind of the man whom we call poet must naturally mingle with every thing, with men and events, with history, philosophy, and nature. He must be able to examine practical questions as well as others, to render direct service, and to put his hand to the work if need be. There are days when every citizen ought to become a soldier, every passenger a sailor. In the grand and illustrious age in which we live, the man who has never drawn back before the laborious missive of the author, has imposed upon himself the law never to draw back : to speak to the intellect is to assume an intellect of one’s own ; and the honest man, be he ever so humble, directly he has taken a duty upon himself, pursues it seriously. To gather facts, and visit things, with his own eyes ; to appreciate difficulties, and, if possible, to point out their solution, such are the conditions of his mission to every one who will sincerely comprehend it. He does not spare himself ; he tries, and he labours : he does his utmost to understand ; and when he has understood, he does his utmost to explain. Perseverance he knows is power : this power he can always bring in aid of his weakness ; and as the drop of water which falls from the rock, at length pierces the mountain, why should not the drop of water falling from a spirit, pierce the great problems of history ?

“ The writer then, who at present speaks, gave up his utmost devotion and energy to the grave task that rose before him ; and after three months of studies, in truth very various of their kind, it appeared to him, that out of the voyage which he had made as an antiquary and an inquirer, in the midst of this harvest of poetry and reminiscences, he

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possibly brought back with him a thought which might be directly useful to his country."—vol. i., p. 6.

It is a hard lot for prophets, and persons in that exalted rank which Monsieur Victor Hugo holds, that they are not allowed to do things like other people, and must be great and mysterious whether they will or not. Witness the well-known story of the prophet Mahomet: after tumbling down in a fit of epilepsy, which he did pretty frequently, he was obliged to say that his spirit was in heaven all the while his body was sprawling, hundreds of billions of miles off, in colloquy with angels. The prophet Hugo, in like manner, cannot perform any ordinary function of life, but he must find an extraordinary reason for it. He goes out to see the fields and the sky, and lo! the Rhine flashes upon him like an apocalypse—it impresses a "certainty of signification to his wanderings," and speak about the Rhine he must. For three months he wanders upon the banks, impelled hither and thither by the divine afflatus puffing within him, up rocks and towers, on board steamers, and in ruins, at ordinaries, where they serve a pudding in the middle of dinner, and make you eat sweetmeats with your roast mutton; no hardship nor danger stops him; on he must go till the season comes for him to speak.

Take it for all in all, it is a hard life, a very hard, thankless life, that of a prophet. Rank you have, it is true; but you are never your own master. You go to take a quiet walk in the fields, and who knows but there is an angel waiting behind the hedge and brings your travelling orders? One advantage a prophet has, it is true, over other men, that whereas these before they "study" a people, must waste much time over dictionaries, learning the language,—the prophetic missionary masters the tongue at once, and by intuition. Hugo comprehends German, though he cannot read it or speak it any more than Chinese. If he did not comprehend German, how should he find out that the Rhinelanders are really most friendly to France, and that the left bank is French in fact? The people

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don't speak French—not even the waiters—but he penetrated at once into the soul of their language, and resolved the riddle of that barbaric jargon as well as if he had studied Mr. Ollendorff for a year. “To see the past on the Rhine,” says he, “one has but to open one's window on the river : to see the future,—let me be pardoned this expression—*one must open a window in one-self.*” A gentleman who has such gifts as these, can see more than most people, certainly ; and has no need to employ the ordinary way of observation.

Thus impelled and endowed the honest poet wanders along pursuing what he calls “his studies,” which are neither more nor less than remarks made from coaches or steamboats, and taken down of a night, and despatched in letters to a friend. Strange letters they are too, and strangely their author speaks about them. They are so genuine, he says, that he will not alter a single letter of the text, not even to change the word *métal* to *metail* : and presently you arrive upon whole pages of the most manifest interpolations ; large robberies made from guide-books and history-books, laborious catalogues of dates, names, and parallels which no man could have made upon a voyage, nor kept in his memory, no not if he had ever so much of a window “to look into himself.”

Every now and then the fancy seizes him to be particularly bashful and retiring, and we have him apologizing for the *moi* which intrudes itself so often in confidential correspondence, and which in these genuine letters he has felt it was his duty to retain. Fatal *moi*, how it offends a man of his modesty, one who thinks so little of himself, to be so continually saluted by the *I*, his own image and representative ! He makes the most violent, amusing efforts to blush when he meets it, or dodges off into corners, or rushes to the other side of the way not to be obliged to look *I* as it were in the face. *Un poète qui passait*, or *celui qui écrit ces lignes*, or *l'écrivain qui parle*, the timid creature will go any way round about, rather than say *I* at once.

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Well, different men have different ways of being modest, but we are thankful, that in spite of all his efforts M. Hugo is still M. Hugo, alive and in the flesh. Not the least bit of a prophet, we make bold to say, and with nothing extra-divine about him. His works, in spite of the critic, will never be taken for *celles de Dieu* : he is not as yet a mere essence, celestial intelligence that floats over the world invisible and can penetrate to the Absolute Truth of Things. At present he has a most undeniable *moi* : every man's *moi* is in truth a strange mixture of good and bad, and quite worth the examining, and M. Hugo's is perhaps more curious than many others. At least it is more amusing : though probably the poet in his own case is not aware of the amusement he brings, and that it is not merely his story which interests us, but the wonderful contortions and strange physiognomy and admirable pomposity of the story-teller.

Is not individuality the great charm of most works of art? Let any two painters make a picture of the same landscape, and the performances of each will differ of course. The distance appears purple to one pair of eyes which is gray to the other's, one man's fields are brown and his neighbour's green, one insists upon a particular feature, and details it, while his comrade slurs it over. Fancy Cuyper and Rubens with the same scene of fields and sky before them, and one can imagine something of the manner in which each would represent it. Monsieur Hugo has a gallant Rubens-like pencil of his own, and sometimes dashes off a noble scene. One might carry such a comparison a good way, and fancy a number of similitudes in the very faults and mannerisms of each artist—a certain coarseness of detail, and swagger, as it were, of the brush—a gross and vulgar, grotesque figure placed in the midst of a fine poetic scene—we light upon such in the works of both continually ; but very little is gained by making such comparisons, which are not true after all, and only sometimes ingenious. Every man has a manner of painting or seeing, or thinking, of his own ; and lucky it is for us too, for in this manner every one's work is a new one, and

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books are fresh and agreeable, though written upon subjects however stale. If a company of authors chose to write down the circumstances of a voyage from the Bank to Clapham, no doubt they would each make a pleasant, novel, and instructive history;—pleasant at least to such persons who like to speculate not only on the subject but on the artist; and this latter is always new, at least he never lasts for more than three-score and ten years, and is perfectly different from all who follow or precede him.

Thus there are very few people who read the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, who have not gone over every inch of the ground which M. Hugo describes, who have not seen Champagne with their own eyes, Epernay and Rheims, Liège and Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne and Deutz, Frankfort, Mayence, and the rest. But a man of such pains and such oddity becomes a very interesting travelling-companion, and keeps one's curiosity perpetually awake. If the road and the scenery is tiresome, at any rate the traveller examining them is always amusing;—that strange, grotesque, violent, pompous, noble figure of a poet, with his braggart modesty, and wonderful simplicity of conceit, his kind heart yearning towards all small things and beauties of nature, small children, birds, flowers, &c., his rich, flowing, large eloquence, and his grim humour. We have read his description of the multifarious duties and accomplishments imposed upon *celui qu'on appelle poète*. He is "to put his hand to the work," he is "never to draw back," he is a part of "his decisive century," a light for mankind, feeling all their wants and their passions; labouring, striving, struggling to understand, "and, when he has understood, to explain."—With this vast load of imaginary duties and perceptions on his back, our poet mounts the cabriolet or the coach-box, and sits there scowling *incognito*, wrapped up in the most majestic remarkable modesty. What a curious figure it is!—An Atlas bearing a bladder.

Having quitted Paris his adventures begin, and he tells you,

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in his simple way, not only what road he took, but why he did not take another road.

“ J'ai donc pris par Meaux.”

This oracular little sentence, stands quite isolated in the midst of a great page, a blank ocean of paper (if we may be allowed so to speak) flowing on either side.

He went, then, by Meaux. He went in a cab—he likes “to travel in that way, to take long journeys by easy stages.” Between Claye and Meaux, under the finest sky, and on the finest road in the world, the wheel of his cab broke. “But you know,” says he to his friend in italics, “that I am one of those men who *continue their journey*. *Justement* a diligence passed—a little diligence—the diligence Touchard.—It had only one vacant place (strange play of destiny !)—I took it, and ten minutes after the accident ‘continued my journey,’ perched on the imperial between a hunchback and a gendarme.”

There is no talking with such fellows, and so our author begins to prattle to himself.

“You know my friend that when I travel, it is not events I seek, but ideas and sensations, and for these a little novelty in objects suffices. For the rest a small matter contents me. Give me trees and grass and air, a road before me and a road behind me, every thing suits me. If the country is flat, I love a large horizon. If the country is mountainous I love unexpected landscapes, and with one of these, the summit of every hill presents me. Just now I saw a charming valley. Right and left were pretty caprices of landscape:—large hills cut into various shapes by cultivation, and squares and plots amusing to see.—Here and there were low cottages of which the thatches seemed to touch the ground; at the bottom of the valley a course of water marked to the eye by a long line of verdure, and traversed by a little old bridge of crumbling rusty stone at the point where the two ends of the road met. As I was looking a cart passed the bridge, an enormous German cart, swollen, packed, and corded. It looked like Gargantua's belly dragged by eight horses and four wheels. The road before me, following the undulations of the hill, was shining in the sun, and on it the shadow of a row of trees designed the black figure of a comb which had lost some of its teeth. Well, these trees, this shadow of a comb (which will make you laugh, perhaps), this waggon, this old road, this old

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bridge, these old cottages—all this pleases me and makes me happy. I am quite content with such a valley as this, with the sky above it. I was the only person in the diligence who cared for it or enjoyed it. The travellers yawned horridly."

The only man in the coach who cared for the combs, &c.—What a parcel of callous rascals they must have been in that diligence—that little diligence—in the diligence Touchard, in a word! They all *yawned horridly, rotonde, intérieur, coupé* and all, and no doubt that cursed hunchback well-nigh gaped his head off his little crooked shoulders. What? were these people not to be amused by a thing which amused a Victor Hugo?—The rogues, little did they think that a Victor Hugo was there, that though seated on the roof he could see every sleepy ignoramus inside, thirteen of them at the very smallest calculation—perhaps seventeen, and that "the poet's eye," "in a fine frenzy rolling," no doubt would roll round every one of them, and so fix them—there they are in his book,—yawning horridly to the end of time.

Perhaps the reader will perceive in the description some traces of what we have called the artist's Rubens-manner. Here, as in many other places, we find the little landscape beautifully coloured and brilliant, and disfigured by something brutal, such as we should take the broken comb, and the *Ventre de Gargantua*, to be. A little further on we have another such picture—an Alsatian family of emigrants passes the poet in his wanderings. He describes brilliantly the Alsatian family with its waggon strangely loaded.

"It had for a team a donkey and a horse On the cart were sauce-pans, caldrons, old trunks, straw chairs, a heap of furniture. In front, in a sort of basket, three little children almost naked, and behind, in another basket, some hens. The conductor of the troupe marched ahead, with a child on his back; a little way behind was a woman carrying a child too—*mais dans son ventre*. * * *Du reste*, these worthy people went on caring for nothing. The man was making a new lash to his whip, the children playing, the woman humming a song. Only the furniture seemed to have a strange out-of-place look

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which was dismal to see. The hens, too, appeared to me to have a proper sentiment of their misfortune.

"This indifference astonished me. Indeed I thought that country was more strongly engraven upon men. *Cela leur est donc égal à ces gens de ne plus voir les mêmes arbres ?*"

A couple of passages in this little extract are untranslatable. The grossness of the first, and the impertinence of the latter. It is all one, is it, to *ces gens*, not to have fine feelings as Monsieur Victor Hugo of the French Academy has, not to care for their native country, as Monsieur Hugo does for his. If they are hungry and can't get bread, good heavens ! Why can't they eat cakes, *ces gens* ? Monsieur Victor Hugo can—ah, Monsieur Hugo—be careful of your jocularities—you are at best but a poor hand at wit—your pleasantries are for the most part old—very old, and weak, and stale. If joke you will, gibe at the rich as a philosopher may, but do not sneer at the poor ; keep your hand from such sorts of blows, giant as you are, and think of your sacred calling.—However, it is unfair to grow angry with *celui qui à écrit ces lignes* ; to do him justice his heart is humane and tender, it is only his taste which is bad ; and his insolence not partial and confined to the poor, but general and systematic. He speaks of princes and citizens with quite as many airs as he has shown to the wretched Alsatian beggars, and the poor little hunchback on the coach-top.

Revenons à notre bossu—the author's sketch of him is grim and amusing, and after telling us how much taxes the hunchback pays, he goes off to a study of the character of his other companion, the gendarme, and gives some particulars of his history.

"In 1814, at Montmirail, he fought like a lion : he was a conscript. In 1830, in the days of July, he was a coward and ran away : he was a gendarme. This seems to astonish him, and does not astonish me in the least. A conscript, he possessed nothing, but his twenty years, and was a brave man. A gendarme, he had a wife and children, a horse of his own he said, and he was a coward. It was the same man,

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but not the same life ; for life is a meat which depends upon the sauce of it. There is no man in the world so intrepid as a galley-slave : one does not hold by one's skin but by one's coat. The galley-slave is naked and has nothing whereon to hang.

" Let us allow, likewise, that the epochs were very different. The atmosphere of the time affects the soldier like any other man. Whatever idea is blowing abroad chills or warms him as it does the rest. In 1830, it was a revolution that was blowing. He felt himself cowering and bending before this force of ideas, which is, as it were, the soul of the force of things—(*cette force des idées, qui est comme l'âme de la force des choses*). Was there anything more likely to oppress him and weigh him down?—to fight for a set of strange ordinances, for shadows that had passed across a troubled brain, for a dream, for a folly, to fight brother against brother, soldier against workman, Frenchmen against Parisian ! In 1814, on the contrary, the conscript was fighting against the foreign invaders, against the enemy, for things which were perfectly clear and simple to him,—for himself, for everybody,—for his father, his mother and sisters ; for the plough which he had just left, the old-home chimney smoking yonder above the thatch, for his land which he had under the very nails of his shoes, for his country still living and bleeding. In 1830, the soldier did not know what he was fighting for. In 1814, he did more than know it, he understood it : he did more than understand it : he felt it : he did more than feel it, he saw it."—vol. vi., pp. 11, 12.

Remark the grave sententious grimaces which our poet assumes, when he commences what he considers, no doubt, a process of reasoning. In mere description his sentences are large, liberal, and diffuse : when he begins to doctrinize, they dwindle away into a wonderful sham conciseness, which apes all the forms of logic. In these neat, well-cut paragraphs he proves to you, first that the gendarme on the coach-box was a coward in 1830, because he had a coat and property, and a brave man in 1813, because he had no property but his skin. Thus, by a beautiful reverse of the argument, he shows you, that the conscript of 1814 was brave because he *had* a property, and that the gendarme was cowardly from no personal considerations, but because he was bound down by the tempest of popular opinion, and knew not how to make head against it. This is very likely close reasoning,—

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so astonishingly close and *serré*, that one sentence absolutely knocks down and destroys the other—which is the conqueror? This is a point perfectly undetermined; but one might have been perfectly happy with either, were t'other dear sentence away. And since one can't take them together * * * but it is indecent to quote such a vulgar ballad-monger as Gay, *à propos* of the great lyric poet of the French Academy.

Thus reasoning and describing, *Celui* (as we had better call him at once) pursues his course. He stops to change horses, and you have a picture much more lively and faithful than that silly, fantastic, historical sketch above given.

"At a relay every thing amuses me. We stop at the gate of a little inn, and the horses arrive with a jingling noise of iron. There is a white hen in the midst of the road, a black one in the hedge yonder, an old broken wheel lies in a corner, and some dirty children are playing on a heap of sand. Above my head, Charles V., or Joseph II., or Napoleon, are hanging up on an old iron gallows by way of sign—great emperors, no longer good for any thing but to bring custom to an inn. The house is full of authoritative voices; in the threshold, kitchen-wenchs and stable-boys are performing idyls, *le fumier cajole l'eau de vaisselle*, and I take advantage of my lofty position on the imperial—to listen to the hunchback and the gendarme talking, or to admire some pretty little colonies of dwarf poppies, that form an oasis upon an old roof opposite."

At Epernay he encountered some more *coquelicots* in a field of turnips, which prevented him from seeing the great curiosity of the place, a cellar containing fifteen hundred thousand bottles of champagne. It is a pity we lost the description of that huge army of flasks, long-necked, with shining silver helmets, each with a devil within him—our poet in his love of personification might have made a brilliant history of the cellar. Three churches have been built at Epernay, M. Hugo says, "one in 1037, by Thibaut, count of Champagne—(of course he did not look in the guide-book for this remarkable fact, but had come prepared with the date in his brain), the second in 1540, by Pierre Strozzi, marshal of France, and Seigneur of Epernay, killed at Thionville in 1558: and the third, the present church, gives one the

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notion of having been built upon the designs of Monsieur Poterlet Galichet, a worthy merchant, whose shop and name are close by the church. The three churches appear to me to be *admirably resumed* and depicted by the three names, Thibaut, count of Champagne, Pierre Strozzi, marshal of France, Poterlet Galichet, grocer."

What a genius at finding similitudes M. Hugo's is!—only one of these churches has he seen, because, indeed, the others are out of sight, and yet he can find how each *admirably depicts* a man whom he never saw. He has but to open the window in himself, and so to look inside and see the whole history. In the same manner, in travelling, he discovers all sorts of "singular symbolisms." Passing over the plains of Montmirail, he saw certain stones strewn over the ground, and casting huge shadows—these stones he compared to *gigantic chessmen*, typifying the game played by Napoleon against Blucher in 1814: at Varennes, where Louis XVI. was stopped in his flight, Victor Hugo found that the *plan* of the town was *triangular*. And strange to say, *the axe of the guillotine* is triangular—a singular symbolism, indeed,—and the poet might have increased it by remarking that the flying monarch had a triangular hat on his head.

And so our author rambles on—discoursing upon all that he sees in his queer braggart way—producing now and then a noble description of a scene or a landscape, a pretty, fantastical, exaggerated sketch of a building, a rich and happy poetical expression, such as the following, of a storm.

Here is a piece which strikes us to be in his very best manner.

"Le soir approchait, le soleil déclinait, le ciel étoit magnifique. Je regardais les collines au bout de la plaine qu'une immense bruyère violette recouvrait à moitié. Tout à coup, je vis un cantonnier redresser sa claie couchée à terre, et la disposer pour s'abriter dessous. Puis la voiture passa près d'un troupeau d'oies qui bavardait joyeusement. Nous allons avoir de l'eau, dit le cocher. En effet je tournai la tête, la moitié du ciel derrière nous étoit envahie par un gros nuage noir, le vent étoit violent, les ciguës en fleur se courbaient jusqu'à terre, les

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arbres semblaient se parler avec terreur, de petits chardons, desséchés couraient sur la route plus vite que la voiture, au-dessus de nous volaient de grandes nuées. Un moment après éclata un des plus beaux orages que j'aie vus. La pluie tombait à verse, mais la nuage n'emplissait pas tout le ciel. Une immense arche de lumière restait visible au couchant. De grands rayons noirs qui tombaient du nuage se croisaient avec les rayons d'or qui venaient du soleil. Il n'y avait plus un être vivant dans le paysage, ni un homme sur la route, ni un oiseau dans le ciel ; il tonnait affreusement, et de larges éclairs s'abattaient par moment sur la campagne. Les feuillages se tordaient de cent façons. Cette tourmente dura un quart d'heure, puis un coup de vent emporta la trombe, la nuée allait tomber en brume diffuse sur les côteaux d'orient, et le ciel redevenait pur et calme. Seulement dans l'intervalle le crépuscule était survenu. Le soleil semblait s'être dessous vers l'occident en trois ou quatre grandes barres de fer rouge, que la nuit éteignait lentement à l'horizon."—vol. i., pp. 48, 49.

We have not ventured to translate the above noble description into English ; for it would be a shame, as we fancy, to alter a single word in it ; so complete does it seem to be. It bursts into the narrative, and is over in a page, like the event it describes. Several more such powerful descriptions will be found in M. Hugo's thousand pages. Here is one of a night-scene at Soissons :

"As I returned to the inn midnight struck. The whole town was as black as a furnace, perfectly silent too, and, to all appearances, quite incapable of making any disturbance of a night, when all of a sudden a stormy clatter was heard at the end of a narrow street. It was the mail coming in. It stopped close to my inn, and I took the only empty place in the vehicle. Just as I was going to take my place, behold, in another little dark street arose such a strange noise, of voices crying, wheels clattering, horses stamping, that I asked for five minutes law, and ran to the spot. Entering into the little street, this is what I saw. In the first place, a great wall, with that horrible chilling aspect that a prison wall always has—there was a little low door in the wall, which was open now, and armed with enormous bolts, as you could see. A few steps from the door, between a couple of mounted gendarmes, was a sort of dismal *carriole*, only half visible in the obscurity. Between the *carriole* and the door was a struggling group of four or five men, dragging towards the carriage a woman who was screaming frightfully. A dark lantern, carried by a man who himself disappeared in the

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shadow of it, threw a light upon this scene. The woman, a stout countrywoman of thirty, resisted with all her might against the men, screamed, struggled, scratched, bit, and every now and then the light fell upon her wild sinister face, which was the very figure of despair. She had seized hold of one of the bars of the wicket, and clutched on to it with all her force. As I came up the men had made a violent effort, took her away from the wicket, and carried her at one bound to the carriage. The light of the lantern was full upon the vehicle, which seemed to have no other opening than some little round holes bored along the side-panels, and a door at the back, shutting outside with great bolts. The man with the lantern drew back the bolts, the door opened, and the interior of the carriage appeared all at once. It was a kind of box, without light and almost without air, and separated into two compartments by a thick board running down the middle. The outside door was so managed, that when closed it shut close upon the edge of this partition-board, and so rendered all communication impossible between the occupants of the two cells in the carriage. Their only furniture was a seat with a hole bored in it. The left box was empty, but that to the right was occupied; and there sate, half doubled up like a wild beast, and lying along the seat for want of room for his knees, a man—if you can call such an animal a man—a sort of spectre, with a square visage and a flat head, large temples and grey hair; his little, short, thick-set limbs, were half covered by an old torn pair of trousers, and a tattered cloth. The wretch's legs were bound tight with a rope, which was tied knot upon knot: he had got a sabot upon his right foot, and the left was bound with bloody rags, from which you saw the toes protruding, horribly crushed and sore. This hideous being was eating quietly a piece of black bread. He paid no attention to what was passing before him: he did not stop even to see who was the woman they were bringing him for companion. Meanwhile, with her head flung back, struggling and writhing in the arms of the gaolers, she kept crying out, 'No, no; I won't, I won't—kill me first—I won't go in!' As yet she had not seen the other man:—all of a sudden, in one of her convulsions, her eyes fell upon the carriage and upon the horrible prisoner sitting in the shade. Then her cries stopped at once; her knees fell under her; she turned away shuddering in every limb, and had hardly the strength to say, as she did in a tone of anguish that in my life I shall never forget, 'Oh that man!'

This is very clever; but, as the reader will no doubt perceive, not quite so true as the former magnificent passage of the storm. It is too circumstantial for truth; and it is quite impossible that a man, by the light of the dark lantern, should see some of the

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ornaments which are introduced into the piece : for instance the seat *percée d'un trou*, and the *horribles doigts mutilés* of the prisoner lying in the shade.

The adventure finishes characteristically. At the screams of the woman the poet went up to ask what her crime was ; whereupon one of the gendarmes, not the least knowing the tremendous author of *Notre Dame de Paris*, demanded his passport. Great heavens ! a gendarme demanding the passport of Victor Hugo !

The letters about France are, to our taste, by far more lively and amusing than the correspondence regarding the Rhine. But in spite of his vows of the sincerity and genuineness of the work, there are interpolations in it so evident, that all the oaths and vows possible would never bring one to credit them. Thus, for instance, *à propos* of Champagne, which he is quitting, the poet is seized with a sort of remorse for having alluded to the old proverb of the *moutons* and the *Champenois*, which reflects considerably upon the intellectual capacity of the latter. So M. Hugo, having hurt the feelings of that great province, proceeds to make an apology, and gives us ten pages of closely-packed names and dates, showing how many heroes and great personages have had Champagne for a birthplace. "Champagne," says he, "has produced Amyot and La Fontaine, Thibaut IV., a poet who was almost a king, Robert de Gorbon, founder of the Sorbonne, Charlier de Gerson, who was chancellor of the university of Paris ; Amadis Samin, the commandeur de Ville-gagnon ; two painters, Lautard and Valentin ; two sculptors, Girardon and Bourchardon ; two historians, Flodoard and Mabillon ; two cardinals, full of genius, Henri de Lorraine and Paul de Gondi ; two popes, full of virtue, Martin IV. and Urban IV. ; a king, full of glory, Philip Augustus."

Will anybody tell us that a gentleman who professes to travel with no other books but Virgil and Tacitus, could sit down at an inn-table, and write to a friend such a series of names ? Ten pages of such he dashes off in one letter, concluding with

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the population of Champagne in 1814 and fifteen years afterwards. M. Hugo's friend has not only a poet for a correspondent, but a regular travelling encyclopedia.

In another place, our unconscionable poet absolutely tells us what he *didn't* see. Thus :

"I left the town of Agrippa behind me, and did not see the old pictures of St. Mary-of-the-Capitol, nor the paved mosaic crypt of St. Gereon, nor the Crucifixion of St. Peter, painted by Rubens for the old half-Roman church of St. Peter, where he was baptized, nor the bones of the eleven thousand virgins in the Ursuline convent, nor the incorruptible body of the martyr Albinus, nor the silver sarcophagus of St. Cunibert, nor the tomb of Duns Scotus in the church of the Minorites, nor the sepulchre of the Empress Theophania, wife of Otho III., in the church of St. Pantaleon, nor the Maternus Gruft in the church of Lisolph, nor the two golden chambers of the church of St. Ursula, and the *dôme* (the cathedral, probably), nor the Hall of Diets, nor"—&c., &c., &c.

Is this all in Virgil or Tacitus? or are we to believe that Monsieur Victor Hugo comes into countries ready provided with all these facts concerning their history and topography? or, finally, that he purchases guide-books, like other people, and robs them like other authors do? In the face of such extracts as these, Monsieur Hugo declares that "these letters were written *au hazard de la plume, without books*, and that the historic facts, or literary texts quoted in them, *are cited from memory*." (*Preface*, xx.) What a prodigious swallow the poet's memory must have!

Before we come to the "conclusion" of the work let us seek one or two specimens more of the poet's descriptive powers, and humour. A pretty story is that in the twentieth letter, of the three pretty young ladies whom, hearing them speak English, he addressed in that language as follows, "*Beautiful wiew!*" and the young ladies began to laugh at his bad English, and discovered him at once to be a Frenchman. Ah! in what disguise can a Frenchman hide himself, and is there any corner of the world in which we cannot detect him and laugh at him?

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The bard falls in love with one of the laughing young ladies, and addresses to her some pretty fantastic lines, and, by the way, for a grave man of a grave age is of decidedly a warm complexion. What, for instance, are those descriptions of young ladies' dressing themselves, and of "vague desires" to be standing at the foot of a ladder when—when we are sorry to say—when a pretty girl is at the top. (See, or rather do *not* see, vol. i. p. 124). Here is another of his loves, much more questionable than his admiration for pretty girls.

"One of the curiosities of Frankfort, one that will soon disappear, I fear, is the butcher's market. It occupies two ancient streets. It is impossible to see older or blacker houses, or to *lean over (se pencher) a more splendid mass of fresh flesh*. I can't tell what an air of *gluttonous joviality* these quaint old carved houses wear—the ground floor of which look like enormous jaws always open and gulping down innumerable quarters of mutton and beef. Butchers *all bloody*, and *rosy* butcher-girls, chat *under garlands of legs of mutton*. A red stream, the colour of which a couple of fountains scarcely serves to alter, flows smoking down the street. At the moment I passed, the place was full of frightful cries. Some inexorable slaughter-house men, with Howdian countenances, were performing a massacre of sucking pigs. Servant-girls with their baskets were standing by and laughing. There are certain ridiculous emotions which a man ought never to betray, but I confess that had I known what to do with one little pig, which a butcher was dragging by its hind legs, and which went quietly, not knowing what was going to happen, I would have bought him and rescued him. A pretty little child, four years old, who saw me, was looking at the animal with compassion, gave me a look which seemed to encourage me in my plan. I did not do what that charming eye told me to do, I did not obey that gentle glance, and reproach myself for it now. A magnificent ensign with the butcher's arms, surmounted by an imperial crown, presides over and completes this butchery—a place worthy of the middle ages, and before which I am sure Calatagirone in the fifteenth century, and Rabelais in the sixteenth, would have passed with wonder."

We quote this elegant extract, not so much for its intrinsic merit, and polite gentlemanlike style, but because it really offers a very good characteristic of M. Hugo's works of fiction, and the secret as it were of his plan in constructing his romances

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and novels. Butcher's meat, over which *il se penche* with an air of "*gluttonous joviality*,"—a little architecture of the middle ages—bloody butchers chatting with red-cheeked butcheresses under garlands of legs of mutton—sweet innocents! sweet mixture of love and raw meat! sweet flowers of poetry!—put in a massacre in the midst—children killed like pigs, or pigs like children, the antithesis is equally tickling, and set off the whole by something innocent;—a little speck of white that shows wonderfully in the midst of the ocean of red.—Esmeralda is constructed exactly upon the plan of the butchery of Frankfort.

And yet the man is kind, although he talks like an ogre. It is only his art which is bloody-minded; we dare swear he was sick, and shuddered at the disgusting sight as he should, and that he can eat no greater quantity of beefsteaks than another man. But thus it is to be obliged to keep up a character for being a giant. You must never speak but roar, you must put your emphasis upon stilts, swell your jokes to the most preposterous size—who the deuce was Calatagirone in the fifteenth century? One of M. Hugo's roars in the character of giant—Calatagirone!—fee, faw, fum; we never should have heard of the fellow had not his name been so loud and frightful.

We had marked the poet's lamentations regarding the *pour boire* as a good specimen of his natural humour, and a famous description of a country-inn kitchen, which is as rich and grotesque as the opening of the very best pantomime. But we have as yet the vast "Conclusion" before us; and so must take leave of the traveller in order to listen to the politician. Say what one will against the former, and quarrel with him as one must—with his bad taste and egotism, his pompous airs and dogmatizing, and his constant tendency to exaggeration,—indeed he is still a very delightful companion. In the midst of his vagaries a man of genius always, and perhaps his company is only the more amusing because he mingles the noble and absurd together, and keeps his auditors always passing from laughter to admiration.

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This "Conclusion," says the French critic before mentioned, who intends for the future to confound the Rhine of Victor Hugo with *celui de Dieu*, is to the work what the ocean is to the river. "L'Océan (says he), voilà l'océan ! car ce beau Rhin que nous venons de parcourir et d'admirer ensemble, n'était qu'un chemin qui marche et qui nous mène à la mer. La mer c'est la *Conclusion*."

The conclusion of the Conclusion may be stated in half-a-dozen words. Walking one night near Andernach, absorbed in a reverie, "the full moon red and round like the eye of a Cyclops," looking down upon him, M. Hugo, the great French poet, marked the vineyards and the tobacco-fields, the *bergeronnettes* (he would have passed over the *bergeronnettes* had they had the unromantic English name), coming to drink at the pools and flying away to the willow beds, the barges with triangular sails drawn by thirteen horses slowly lugging up the stream. He listened to the measured tramp of the steeds, the noise of the whips and bells : and one particular barge he remarked had inscribed upon the poop, the *austère et doux nom*, Pius.

It had not much to do with the subject ; but it entered into his soul. He walked and walked, "absorbed in the reverie in which all nature was plunged ;" but as for how long a time he walked, he does not know. He may have walked for a hundred years, like Pécopin (see vol. ii.) ; he may have walked round the whole world and so come back again ; but the shining moon was in its zenith, the country was deserted, and of a sudden he found himself at the foot of an eminence, "crowned with a little obscure block," and he mounted the eminence, wading through heaps of beans freshly cut.

It is not too much to say, that Monsieur Victor Hugo on that day and by straddling across those beans, settled the fate of Europe.

The block of stone was the tomb of Hoche. "Hoche was, like Marceau, one of those great incomplete young men, in

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whom Providence, who wished that the revolution should conquer and France should dominate, made a prelude to Bonaparte. Incomplete proofs, attempts only half successful, that destiny flung away so soon as it had drawn out of the shade, the finished and severe profile of the *definitive man*."

Dieu sait ce qu'il fait. We have Victor Hugo's word for it. He alludes to Providence on fifty occasions, and shows a most intimate acquaintance with its mysteries and designs. He is not jealous of heaven, but speaks of it familiarly and on a footing of equality, though respectfully, as one great power would of another. It may be remarked indeed that almost all French writers are admitted to this privilege,—the Divine name is always in their mouths, and used on the very commonest and meanest occasions of life. They have divine missions too, most of them—Lamartine has had celestial things revealed to him, and has seen heaven through his tears—Madam Dudevant intimates that she is a martyr (and we dare not say what more)—Laroux and Lamennais each come forward with revelations and prophecies to supersede old gospels; even such a man as Alexandre Dumas prefaces some filthy story of blood and lust, by hinting that it contains a holy mystery of which he is the heaven-sent expounder. Oh! sacred awful name of Providence * * * but we are keeping Monsieur Hugo still gazing at the stone, still pompously explaining the designs of Providence, as he stands there moon-stricken on the hill.

He says that after looking for a while at the stone, and peering into the vault, he heard a voice coming from it, which uttered these words, "IL FAUT QUE LA FRANCE REPRENNE LE RHIN,"—that is what the voice said to Monsieur Victor Hugo of the French Academy. What can one answer in reply to a message from heaven?

Let us hope, however, for the interest of humanity, and of at least five hundred thousand human creatures who must bloodily perish by gun and bayonet, in case this voice that M. Hugo heard out of the hole really *were* a celestial one—let us hope

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that there is some mistake on the poet's part, and that there was no such intimation conveyed to him. *Du reste* it is an old plan, that of hearing voices and having visions; and most of our readers remember the story recorded, we believe, by "a writer of the 17th century." Signor Guiseppe Molinaro (the Meunier of the French, the *μυλωθρος* of the Greeks, the Molitor of the Romans, the Mühler of the Saxon nations), and quite as celebrated as M. Hugo's friend Calatagirone—Mr. Joseph Miller tells a story of an Indian Cacique, who, taking a fancy to a very handsome red coat and epaulets, or a pair of laced breeches (it matters not what), worn by an European settler, came to the settler, and said, "Brother, I have had a dream. I walked yesterday by the banks of the Ohio, and marked the wagtails dipping in the pools, and flying off to the willow-beds. The moon, round as the eye of a Cyclops, was glancing down upon me. I walked, I know not how long, plunged in the universal reverie of nature, when a spirit came to me and said, 'Tomahee Tereboo, lo, I come from heaven; and, as a sign, I bring you the Englishman's breeches, for which your soul longeth.' "

Molinaro relates that the Englishman ceded the garment in question: but on the next night *he* had a vision. An angel told him that Tomahee Tereboo had given him a hundred thousand acres of land on the banks of the river, which the savage did; but perceiving the inutility of such visions, for the future Tomahee took care to sleep very soundly and quietly, and to have no manner of dreams. But to return to Monsieur Hugo's voice. The only wonder is that when the ghost of Hoche was heard shouting, *France must retake the Rhine*, the echoes in the neighbourhood did not reply, *Let France come and try*.

To be sure M. Hugo would not have understood them. He does not know a single syllable of German—of German politics, of German feelings, he is perfectly ignorant. He has been for two months on the Rhine, and fancies he has made

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discoveries—he says the people of the left bank are French, and how can he tell? If he had lighted on the ten tribes talking Hebrew by the river Sabbatikon, he would have interpreted their feelings just as well. He might hear the Rhinelanders, big and little, as every traveller in the country has heard them within the last two years, shouting down the streets of every town on the left bank, *Sie sollen ihn nicht haben*; and the French academician is a sort of man who would turn round and say, “Harken to that melody; ’tis sung by patriots. All patriots are poets. *Sie sollen ihn nicht haben* means, the Rhinelanders of the left bank await their brethren of France.”

The only argument that he has for declaring that the men of the left bank are Frenchmen—will it be believed, the only argument?—is, that in the inns of the left bank you see pictures of Napoleon everywhere, whereas on the right bank you see Frederick. “The people,” says he, “have still *la liberté de la muraille*!”

To which wise argument it may be replied that the liberty of the wall proves nothing: that pictures of Napoleon are to be found at Moscow and St. Petersburg, that there is hardly a gentleman’s house in England where a print of Napoleon is not to be found, and it will be absurd to argue that because the people admire Napoleon who was not a Frenchman, they must be Frenchmen—and finally, it may be said simply that the poet’s statement is quite untrue, and that you will find quite as many Fredericks and Napoleons on one bank of the stream as on the other. To be sure we have not counted—no more has Victor Hugo, but the great bard has thought it convenient on looking down the river, and examining the different wine-shops on its banks, and the pictures on the walls of the wine-shops, to shut his right eye.

He sets out then, with the dictum that France must have the Rhine, and the conclusion is an historical disquisition embracing all the history of mankind since Charlemagne; and

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tending to show, as we imagine, that this arrangement must come about. It is intended by Providence, M. Hugo says, and then he begins to chop and to change countries and histories according to his system, to establish similitudes, parallels, symbols, types—heaven knows what. If he finds a queer old book that has, perchance, escaped the pastrycooks of former ages, he seizes upon a passage and thrusts it into the midst of a disquisition; a little scrap in any author that strikes his mind as mysterious or picturesque, he carries it off to his huge receptacle of phrases, and decks himself with it as a savage does with a bead or a button.

Here are specimens of his style of declamation and argument. He begins, in the simplicity of his heart, by gravely apologizing to the nations about whom he is going to treat, for being obliged to say some unpleasant truths concerning them. A morning paper has taken the trouble of translation off our hands.

“Before we proceed further, it behoves us to declare that this is but a cold and grave study of history. He that writes these lines understands the hatreds of nation to nation, the antipathies of races, the blindness of nationalities; he excuses them, but shares not in them. Nothing, in what has just been read, nothing in what has still to be read, contains a reprobation that can fall upon the nations themselves, of which the author speaks. The author sometimes censures governments, but never censures nations. In general, nations are what they ought to be; the root of good is in them; God develops it and makes it yield its fruit. The four nations themselves of which the picture is here drawn, will render notable service to civilization the day they acknowledge the common object of mankind as their special object. Spain is illustrious, England great; Russia, and Turkey herself, contain several of the best elements of futurity.

“We also consider it a duty to declare, with the profound independence of our mind, that we do not extend to princes what we say to governments. Nothing is easier nowadays than to insult kings. Insult to kings is flattery addressed to another quarter. Now, to flatter anybody in such fashion, whether upwards or downwards, is an idea that he who speaks here need not reject; he feels himself free, and is free because he knows he has spirit enough to praise, whenever there is occasion for it, who ever seems to him deserving of praise, were

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it even a king. He therefore says it openly and from a full conviction never, at any period, and whatever epoch of history may be confronted with ours, never have princes and nations been worth what they are now worth.

"Let, therefore, no applications, wounding either to the honour of royalties, or to the dignity of nations, be sought for in this historical examination. It is, before all, a philosophic and speculative work. It exhibits general facts, and nothing more; general ideas, and nothing more. The author has no bitterness in his soul. He candidly awaits the serene futurity of humanity. He has hope in princes, and faith in nations.

"Let us now continue to examine the points of resemblance between the two empires which have alarmed the past, and the two empires which alarm the present.

"A first resemblance. There is something of the Tartar in the Turk, as well as in the Russian. The genius of nations always retains something of their source.

"The Turks, offspring of the Tartars, are men of the North, who descended through Asia, and entered Europe by the South.

"Napoleon said at St. Helena, '*Scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar.*' What he said of the Russian may be said of the Turk.

"The Man of the North, properly so called, is always the same. At certain climatic and fatal periods he descends from the Pole and exhibits himself to the southern nations, then goes away, and returns two thousand years after, and history find him again such as it had left him.

"Here is an historical painting which we have at this moment under our eyes, 'that is truly the Barbarian. His limbs, thick and short, his neck the same, a something hideous in all his body, made him resemble a monster with two feet, or those balustrades coarsely carved into human figures which support the steps of our staircases. He is quite a savage. He does without fire when he must, even to prepare his food. He eats roots and flesh cooked, or rather putrefied, under his horse saddle. He enters beneath a roof only when he cannot do otherwise. He has a horror of houses as if they were tombs. He crosses valleys and mountains; he runs before him; he has learned from infancy to endure hunger, thirst, and cold. He wears a large fur-cap on his head, a woollen petticoat on his stomach, two goat-skins on his thighs, and on his back a mantle of rat-skins. He cannot combat on foot. His legs made heavy by large boots, cannot walk, but nail him to his saddle so that he makes but one animal with his horse, which is always nimble and vigorous, but small and ugly. He lives on horseback, makes treaties on horseback,

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buys and sell on horseback, drinks on horseback, sleeps and dreams on horseback.

“ ‘ He ploughs not the earth, he cultivates not fields ; he knows not what a plough is. He wanders for ever, as if in quest of a country and home. If you ask him of what place he is, he knows not what to reply. He is here to-day, but yesterday he was there ; he was bred yonder, but was born further on.

“ ‘ When the battle commences he roars tremendously ; arrives, strikes, disappears, and returns like lightning. In a moment he carries and plunders the assailed camp. He fights close with the sabre, and from afar with a long lance, the point of which is ingeniously contrived.’

“ This is the Man of the North ? By whom was he sketched ?—at what period, and after whom ? No doubt in 1814, by some frightened writer of the *Moniteur*, after the Cossack, at the time France yielded ? No ; this picture was taken after the Hun, in the year 375, by Ammianus Marcellinus and Jordanis, at the time Rome was falling. Fifteen hundred years have elapsed since, and the figure has reappeared, and the portrait still resembles.

“ Let us note that the Huns of 375, like the Cossacks of 1814, came from the frontiers of China.

“ The Man of the South changes, transforms, and develops himself—flourishes and fructifies—dies and revives again, like vegetation ;—the Man of the North is eternal, like snow.

“ A second resemblance. In Russia, as in Turkey, nothing is finally acquired by anybody, nothing is quite possessed, nothing is necessarily hereditary. The Russian, like the Turk, may, according to the pleasure, or caprice of a higher power, lose his occupation, grade, rank, liberty, property, nobility, and even his name. All belongs to the monarch, just as in certain theories, still more insane than dangerous, which it will be vainly attempted to adapt to the French, everything would belong to the community. It is important to remark, and we submit the fact, to the meditation of absolute democrats, that the characteristic of despotism is to level. Despotism establishes equality under it. The more complete the despotism, the more complete the equality. In Russia, as well as Turkey, saving rebellion, which is not a regular fact, there is no existence decidedly and virtually resisting. A Russian Prince is shattered just as a Pacha ; the Prince, like the Pacha, may become a private soldier, and be in the army no more than a cypher, whose figure a corporal is. A Russian Prince is created like a Pacha ; a pedlar becomes a Mehemet Ali ; a pastrycook's boy becomes a Menzikoff. This equality which we record here without pronouncing an opinion on it, ascends even to the throne, and always in Turkey,

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and at times in Russia, couples with it. A slave is a Sultana, a servant has been a Czarine.

"Despotism, like demagogy, hates natural superiorities and social superiorities. In the war it wages against them, the former shrinks not more than the latter from the deeds which behead society itself. To it there are no men of genius. Thomas More weighs not more in the scales of Henry Tudor than Bailly in the scales of Marat. To despotism there are no crowned heads; Mary Stuart weighs not more in the scales of Elizabeth than Louis XVI. in the scales of Robespierre.

"The first thing that strikes one, when one compares Russia with Turkey, is a likeness; the first thing that strikes one, when one compares England with Spain, is an unlikeness. In Spain, royalty is absolute; in England, it is limited.

"On reflecting on it, one comes to this singular result: this unlikeness gives rise to a likeness. The excess of monarchism produces, as regards royal authority, and in considering it only under that special point of view, the same result as the excess of constitutionalism. In either case the king is annulled.

"The King of England, served on bended knees, is a nominal king; the King of Spain, also served on bended knees, is likewise a nominal king. Both are impeccable. A remarkable thing is that the fundamental axiom of the most absolute monarchy is equally the fundamental axiom of the most constitutional monarchy. *El rey no cal*, the king falls not, says the old Spanish law; *The king can do no wrong*, says the old English law. What is there more striking, when one explores history, than to find, beneath facts seemingly the most different, pure monarchism and rigorous constitutionalism established on the same basis, and rising from the same root.

"The King of Spain could be, without danger, just as the King of England, a child, a minor, an ignorant man, or an idiot. The Parliament governed for the one, the *Despacho Universal* for the other. The day the news of the capture of Mons reached Madrid, Philip IV. rejoiced much; pitying aloud *that poor King of France (ese pobrecito rey de Francia)*. Nobody ventured to tell him that it was to him the King of Spain that Mons belonged. Spinola, whilst investing Breda, which the Dutch admirably defended, detailed in a long letter to Philip III. the innumerable impossibilities of the siege. Philip returned him his letter, after inserting in the margin with his own hand the mere words '*Marquis, take Breda.*' Stupidity or genius only can write this. One must either know nothing or will everything—be a Philip III. or a Bonaparte. To such insignificance could a King of Spain fall, isolated as he was from all thought and action by the very form of his authority. The grand charter isolates the King of England

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in about the same way. Spain struggled against Louis XIV. with a silly king; England struggled against Napoleon with an insane king.

"Does not this prove that, in the two cases, the king is purely nominal? Is it a good, or is it an evil? This we also record, without pronouncing upon it.

"Nothing is less free than a King of England, unless it be a King of Spain. To both is said—'*Vous pouvez tout, à la condition de ne rien vouloir.*' Parliament binds the first; *etiquette* binds the second. Such is the irony of history. Those two obstacles, so different, produce, in certain cases, the same effects. Sometimes the Parliament rebels, and kills the King of England; sometimes *etiquette* rebels, and kills the King of Spain—a strange parallel, but an undeniable one, wherein the scaffold of Charles I. has for its *pendant* the furnace of Philip III.

"One of the main results of this annihilation of royal authority, through causes almost contrary, is, that the Salic law becomes useless. In Spain, as in England, women may reign.

"There still exists more than one other point of resemblance between the two people which an attentive comparison teaches us. In England, as in Spain, pride and patience form the basis of the national character. That is, considering all, and saving the restrictions we shall point out elsewhere, an admirable temper which urges nations to great deeds. Pride is a virtue in a nation, patience is a virtue in an individual.

"With pride one rules, with patience one colonises. Now, what do we find at the bottom of the history of Spain as well as the history of England? Ruling, and colonising.

"Just now we drew a picture, with our eyes fixed upon history, of the Castilian infantry. If you read it over again, you will find it is also a picture of the English infantry.

"Just now we pointed out some features of the Spanish clergy. In England there is also an Archbishop of Toledo; he is called the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"If we descend into the slightest particulars, we see that as regards those minute imperious details of domestic and material life, which are, as it were, the second nature of a people, the two nations, strange to say, are in the same way tributary to the ocean. Tea is to England, what cocoa was to Spain—the habit of the nation; and consequently, according to circumstances, an occasion of alliance, or a cause of war.

"Let us pass to another order of ideas.

"There has been, and still exists among certain nations, a horrible dogma, contrary to the internal feeling of the human conscience, and contrary to the public sense, which is the very life of states. It is that

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fatal religious aberration, erected into law in some countries, which establishes it as a principle and believes that in burning the body one saves the soul—that the tortures of this world preserve a human being from the tortures of the other—that Heaven is to be won by physical sufferings—and that God is but a great executioner, smiling from the height of the eternity of his hell, at all the hideous little punishments that man can invent. If ever a dogma was contrary to the development of human sociability it is that one. It is it that harnesses itself to the car of Juggernaut: it is it that presided a century ago at the annual exterminations of Dahomey. Whoever feels and reasons rejects it with horror. In vain have the religions of the East transmitted it to the religions of the West. No philosophy has adopted it. For three thousand years past the pale light of those sepulchral doctrines, without attracting a single thinker, has vaguely reddened the foot of the monstrous porch of the agonies of India—a sombre and gigantic edifice which loses itself, half perceived by terrified humanity, through the bottomless darkness of infinite mystery.

“That doctrine kindled in Europe in the sixteenth century the funeral piles of the Jews and heretics. The Inquisition raised them—Spain stirred the fire. That doctrine still kindles in Asia, at the present day, the funeral piles of widows. England neither raises them nor stirs the fire, but she looks on as they burn.

“We wish not to draw from those *rapprochemens* more than they contain. And yet, it is impossible for us not to remark that a people that were fully in the path of civilisation could not tolerate, even from policy, those mournful, atrocious, and infamous follies. France, in the sixteenth century, rejected the Inquisition. In the nineteenth, were India a French colony, France would long ago have extinguished the Suttee.

“Since, whilst noting here and there the unperceived, but real points of contact of Spain and England, we have spoken of France, let us observe that some are to be found in events apparently purely accidental. Spain had had the captivity of Francis I. England has shared in that glory or opprobrium—she has had the captivity of Napoleon.

“There are characteristic and memorable things which revert, and are repeated, for the instruction of attentive minds, in the deep echoes of history. The words of Waterloo—*La garde meurt et ne se rend pas !*—are but the heroic translation of the words of Pavia—*Tout est perdu, fors l'honneur !*”

See what it is to be a poet with a genius for similes ! The reader of this long extract may amuse himself with studying

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likenesses and unlikenesses, unlikenesses that are like and likenesses that are unlike; parallels that show a wondrous disposition to meet and to diverge. And in the name of all the Muses, for what purpose? Is the permission of the Suttee in British India in the least like the inquisition in Spain? Has the captivity of Napoleon the slightest likeness to the captivity of Francis the First? Have Francis's words at Pavia any resemblance to the words which were *not* uttered at Waterloo? And suppose they have, what then?

And now we come to the very greatest discovery that has been made by a modern poet.

"In short, besides the direct *rapprochemens* that history reveals between the four nations which are the subject of this paragraph, there exist I know not what strange and, as it were, *diagonal relations*! which seem to connect them mysteriously, and point out to the thinker a *secret similitude of conformation*, and consequently, perhaps, of destination. Let us mark two only here. The first is between England and Turkey: Henry VIII. killed his wives, as did Mahomet II. The second is between Russia and Spain: Peter I. killed his son, as did Philip II."

Diagonal similarities! Let us thank the bard for teaching us that word: if it were but to have discovered diagonal similarities, M. Hugo has not laboured on the Rhine in vain. It is a great and noble method of argument, as thus—

Henry VIII. killed his wives,
Mahomet II. killed his wives;
Therefore Russia devoured Turkey.
Peter I. killed his son,
Philip II. killed his son;
Therefore England devoured Spain.

The great immutable laws of zigzag are thus established; and the discoverer cries, in delighted enthusiasm,

"Russia has devoured Turkey.

"England has devoured Spain.

"This is, according to our way of thinking, a last and definite assimilation. A state devours another on condition only of reproducing it."

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Pshaw!—any one who wants to know how the last and definitive assimilation is contradicted, need only look to the author's own account of the Turkish seizure of Greece. It did not reproduce it, says he, "A l'instant même, au seul contact des Turcs, la Grèce était devenu barbare. Le Grec en passant par la bouche des Turcs, en étoit rétrogradé patois :—dérision amère des mots et des choses, dégradation et parodie, &c." Greece disappeared, how did Turkey reproduce it? Then as to the assertion that England has devoured Spain, the author immediately and in the very next paragraph magnificently contradicts himself, by showing that every other nation has had a much greater share of the spoil.

"It suffices to look over two maps of Europe, drawn at an interval of fifty years, to see in what an irresistible, slow, and fatal manner the Muscovite frontier invades the Ottoman Empire. It is the gloomy and formidable aspect of an immense rising tide. At every moment and on all sides the waves advance, and the shores disappear. The waves are Russia; the shore Turkey. Sometimes the billows recede, but they rise again, the moment after, and this time they go farther. A large part of Turkey is already covered, and it is still vaguely perceived, beneath the Russian overflowing. On the 20th of August, 1828, a billow rolled as far as Adrianople. It retired, but when it returns it will reach Constantinople.

"As for Spain, the dislocations of the Roman empire, and of the Carolingian empire, can alone give an idea of that prodigious dismemberment, without reckoning the Milanese which Austria has taken—without reckoning Roussillon, Franche-Comté, the Ardennes, the Cambasis, and Artois, which have reverted to France—of the fragments of the ancient Spanish monarchy four kingdoms have been formed in Europe, even leaving out the kingdom of Spain properly so called, Portugal, Sardinia, the Two Sicilies, and Belgium; in Asia a viceroyalty, India, equal to an empire; in America nine republics—Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, La Plata, and Chili. Either by influence, or by direct sovereignty, Great Britain now possesses the largest portion of that enormous inheritance. She has almost all the islands that Spain had, and which almost, literally speaking, were innumerable. As we said in the beginning, she has devoured Spain just as Spain had devoured Portugal; and now, in casting the eye over the British dominions, one sees but Portuguese and Castilian names—Gibraltar, Sierra Leone,

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Ascension, Fernando Po, Las Mascarenhas, El Cabo Delgado, El Cabo Guardafu, Honduras, Las Lucaias, Las Bermudas, La Barbada, La Trinidad, Tobago, Santa Margarita, La Granada, San Christoforo, Antigoa. Everywhere Spain is visible, everywhere Spain reappears. Even under the presson of England, the fragments of the empire of Charles the Fifth have not yet lost their shape ; and let us be permitted a comparison which expresses our thought—one recognises *the whole Spanish monarchy* in the possessions of Great Britain as one finds again the half-digested jaguar in the belly of the boa."

The whole Spanish monarchy! what the Milanese, Roussillon, Franche-Comté, Cambasis, Artois, Portugal, Sardinia, Sicily, and Belgium, are all these in the boa's belly, along with the South American republics?

By the way Spain itself is not included, which somehow in the flurry of the declamation has passed out of the poor writer's brain. It can't hold many things together, or remember its own creations too long, that rambling, wool-gathering, big-browed poet's head. Brilliant images, and fine colours, and loud sounds pass through it, and dazzle and confound it; one thought follows another so brightly and quickly, that by the time he has done spouting a sentence he has forgotten its predecessor, and is already on a wild look-out for some new fancy. There is something almost affecting, in the way in which the simple creature produces his catalogue of names of the West India islands, that indeed are almost as long to count as the kingdoms and provinces which he has reckoned before. Ascension, Las Bermudas, El Cabo Delgado!—indeed they sound quite as fine as Sardinia, or Sicily, or South America. He gives the population of the islands somewhere else, but by this time they are quite whisked out of his brain. What does he care for a few figures? he has caught his simile at the end of the sentence, his jaguar in the boa's belly, and sits down, for two or three seconds or so, quite happy.

As for the Rhine, he has discovered that at the end of the war Russia and England, out of profound dissimulation, *gave the left bank to Germany*. And though to be sure it cannot

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be denied, that this Rhine bank so given to Germany has been actually German for a thousand years : yet, says he, Charlemagne, Louis XIV. and Napoleon *wanted to have it* for France; in the old Carlovingian maps it is written *Francia Rhenana*, and therefore it is France. (569.) The handing it over to Germany in 1815 was a “chef-d’œuvre of hatred, of deceit, of discord, and calamity if you will, but a chef-d’œuvre—*la politique en a comme cela*.” (570.) “The kings said to one another, Here is the robe of Joseph.” (France is *Joseph*—Bon Dieu ! would any man but Victor Hugo have lighted upon the simile, or can we forget that this new Joseph had gone out pistol in hand and robbed the garment in question), “Here is the robe of Joseph, let each man take his share.” (579.)

Joseph must have back his robe ; and M. Hugo thinks that the matter may be arranged peaceably between France and Prussia, thus—“Hanover,” says he, “to Prussia, and the Rhine to France ! France and Germany will thus form *Europe*. France will take under her protectorate the smaller kingdoms of the south ; Germany, the inferior states of the north ; Russia will be pushed back into his snows ; and England remain isolated in her seas.”

If you want to know what France is (besides being Joseph) —“France is, *in fact*, the thought, the intelligence, the publicity, the book, the press, the tribune, the speech, the tongue of the whole world. (587.) Germany *feels*—France *thinks*. There were old republics, but they have gone, because they were limited and special. France, for her part, stipulates for the people and all people : she has that which saves nations, unity ; not that which destroys them, *egotism*. For her to conquer provinces is well ; to conquer minds is better still. (603.) Charles I. died in his island, Europe took no notice : Louis XVI. perished, and the whole world was in a flame. (613.) The ancient republics have passed away :—in the day when France shall be extinguished, *there will be twilight on the face of the earth*. (606.) But no, there is no such danger. France will

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have her natural boundary, and be content. The highest intelligences, which at the present moment represent the politics, literature, science, and art *of the whole universe*, France possesses them, and France gives them to civilization. Satisfy her, then ; and above all, reflect upon this, Europe can never be tranquil while France is not content." (625.)

Here we have, in the poet's own modest words, the character and demands of his nation. And while he was making the latter, it must be confessed that the world ought to be somewhat grateful to him, for he only asks for a few hundred miles of extra territory, and might just as well have asked for Moscow and Cairo, for Spain and Canada, for every town or country which French robbers have overrun, or which have been sacked and ravaged by French fire and sword. The descendants of the Black Prince and Henry V., by exactly the same argument, might ask for their ancient inheritances, Gascony, Aquitaine, Normandy, and the kingdom itself. Did not Henry VI. possess it once? Nay, how long is it since General Müffling was governor of the capital, and the Germans masters of it? The Cossacks have just as good a claim to Paris as the French to Cologne. Seeing, then, the endless quarrels and inconvenience to which such discussions might give rise, would not it be better for Monsieur Hugo to exert his gigantic influence among his countrymen, and induce them to be contented at once, and with things as they are. Surely, according to his own showing, his country is pretty well provided for. He has his intellectual superiority : " his Pascal for a Pope ; and what a pope !—his Voltaire for an Antichrist ; and what an Antichrist ! " His gods—his devils are better than those of any other nation : he has his religion and his irreligion to be proud of. Before the fame of his people all other reputations are futile : " it took Shakspeare 150 years to be known in France," as he says ; and the reason was, not because French people are absurdly ignorant, and proud of their ignorance, but because they have really such a superiority of their own, that they are satisfied with it, and

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naturally must be careless regarding humbler fame. All the world is instructed by them. "The politics, the literature, the art, the science of the whole universe," belongs to them.

Ah, JOSEPH (we love the appropriate name), be content with this peaceful monarchy—fly from vainglory as from Potiphar's wife. Be modest, Joseph, according to your nature, and you shall rule over the land ; the other children of Jacob shall come bowing before you, and you shall receive them with meekness and kindness ; laying up granaries of wisdom to feed the nations in times of want, and being the chosen and upright friend of all.

There is a great deal in M. Hugo's conclusion which we have been forced to pass over—the history of all the empires and republics of Europe—of the Spanish Armada, the Czar of Muscovy, the great Cham of Tartary, and Prester John ; for all these things the reader is referred to the book itself, of which, unless it were transferred bodily to our pages, no one could form an accurate idea—perhaps not even then.

But the great discovery of the book is decidedly JOSEPH.

THE GERMAN IN ENGLAND.

THE German naturalist made a pleasant excursion in England, and having been very hospitably received, not only by his scientific brethren (one of whose meetings at Birmingham he came to this country to witness), but also by many of the gentry, possessors of handsome houses and parks, kind dispensers of good cheer, he has seen the country in its most agreeable aspect, and writes of it with grateful good nature. And so simple, kind-hearted, and unassuming seems the German man of science to be, that his reader cannot fail to be pleased with his companionship, and to share his good humour. It is a fine thing to travel, even in imagination, through the rich inland counties of England in the cheerful summer-time; to go from one fine house to another, where welcome, plenty, elegance, and kindness await you; where all the men are hearty and kind, all the ladies handsome and smiling; where the claret is of the very best, the lordly parks in full leaf, and the best of venison in season. There is scarcely any foreign traveller that we know of who has not been duly affected by such things; and whose records of them are not, by reflection, pleasant. We have had many harmless Barmecide feasts in the company of Dukes and Earls to whom we have been presented by his Highness Fürst Pückler, that thoughtful dandy chronicler. Who has not spent a month in the Highlands, in the castle of the Duke of G-rd-n, and cheek-by-jowl with his Excellency the Earl of Ab-rd-n (M-n-st-r of State for F-r-gn Affairs), being introduced to those great personages by the incomparable Mr. N. P. Willis? And with Miss Sedgwick, or Mr. Fenimore Cooper for a conductor, have we not had the honour to dance

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at Devonshire-house, to dine with Lord S-fton or Sir George W-rr-nder, to breakfast with Mr. Samuel R-gers,—in fact to enjoy all the delights of the best company of the greatest city of the greatest country in the world ! Of all these modern travellers in genteel English society, only one has been discontented with what he saw or ate—and if Mr. Fenimore Cooper's notions of equality are such that he cannot brook superiority in his neighbours, and his stomach so delicate that hospitality and kindness makes him sick, at least it may be said of the others that they were pleased with the attention shown to them ; and expressed their sense of the good things enjoyed by them each in his way. Sometimes, perhaps, in perusing their descriptions of feasts given, and great and beautiful personages seen, the English reader may feel a little pang of mortification that he, being an Englishman and no foreigner, may live to be a thousand years old, and never have a chance of figuring at Almack's, or hobnobbing with a Duke at dinner : but such little outbreaks of envy are soon suppressed in the well-regulated mind ; and the next best thing to enjoying a good thing one's self, is to see another honest fellow heartily and kindly enjoying it. Besides, we have in our turns this consolation, that we bakers' sons, or retired linendrapers, or erratic lawyers'-clerks, with a sufficient sum of money to carry us genteelly through a six-months' continental tour, we need only purchase a fancy volunteer's uniform from some fashionable tailor in Holywell-street, and may in our turn figure in foreign courts, dancing quadrilles with the best duchesses at the Tuileries, or eating sauer-kraut by the side of German counts and dukes of thirty descents. Let all English persons excluded from the fashionable world and envious that foreigners should so easily be admitted to it, take the above remark into consideration, and remember that if genteel England is shut to them, all Europe on the other hand is their own.

Our honest "Naturforscher" (who as we conjecture from certain very pertinent though severe remarks which he makes

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concerning the German "adel" has not himself the privilege of writing "von" before his respectable name) is not in the least degree blinded or puffed up into vanity by the attentions paid him by great people, and instead of taking advantage of their kindness to fancy himself a dandy and an aristocratic personage, as some of the travellers before mentioned have done, his sense of the hospitality he has received only takes the shape of perfect good humour and contentment with things about him; and we would almost venture to assert, that the friends whom this simple, shrewd, kindly German traveller has visited, would be glad to see him again.

He writes of all he has seen without the least affectation, and with so much pleasantry and liveliness, that the reader at the end of the volume comes to have a warm personal liking for the author—the English reader certainly; for he is in love with our country, its men and its women, its manliness, and straightforward simplicity: somewhat of a tory, perhaps, he still modestly avoids all political discussions, which do not even interest him, he says: he thinks port wine capital (accounting excellently for our partialities that way): we find him coolly taking his share of "*einigen* bouteillen double stout" on the very first day of his arrival: add to this, he hates a Frenchman heartily, having a most thorough contempt for his braggadocio and his disposition to chatter, and his absurd pretensions to be the leader of civilization. In these opinions upon French and English manners, and the beer of the latter country, Monsieur Victor Hugo and others may not agree; but perhaps it is one of the reasons why, as an Englishman, one cannot help having a sympathy with the honest, jovial *Naturforscher*. He begins with saying:

"In a former period of my life, I passed many years in Great Britain and France: to the last-named country I brought a great number of letters of recommendation,—to the former, but one. In both countries, especially in the capitals, of each, I made many acquaintances—those made in France have long since ceased, and did not indeed survive my

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stay in Paris; while those contracted in England still exist, with all the old intimacy, although, since first they were formed, almost a score of years have passed away. For close private friendship, the chief part of Frenchmen do not seem to be formed; their personal intercourse is generally pleasing and obliging, though it must be presumed that these social virtues exhibit themselves in words rather than in actions. Out of sight, out of mind, seems to be the Frenchman's motto, and the foundation of this sort of forgetfulness lies in the heartlessness of his character. How different is the Briton! In outward appearance cold, haughty, selfish, unsympathising,—inwardly he is warm, highminded, accommodating, and ready to make personal sacrifices: these and other virtues will be found to develop themselves in the Englishman, by those who know the right way to move him.

"This preface will enable my readers to understand the reason which led me (it is now some short time back) to cross the channel for the third time.

"For this end two routes were before me. The one lay through *La belle France* and its capital, the other by the great water-road, the Rhine. The charms of a journey through beautiful France, I had already sufficiently experienced. The comforts of a dirty diligence, and the exquisite society to be found in it, the bad roads of the paternal land of Europe, the *ennui* of the journey, and of a sojourn in some of those dismal provincial towns, pitiful reflexes of the capital, were already so well known to me, that I did not hesitate a moment as to the road I should take.

"One Saturday morning, then, in the month of August, I bade farewell to my home. How different are the feelings with which a lad leaves it on his travels, to those which fill the heart of a husband and father, who is separating himself for a while from all that in earth is most dear to him! The one goes *omnia sua secum portans*, the other leaves a part of himself behind him. I was obliged to put some restraint upon my feelings as I pressed a last kiss upon the cheek of the little one still sleeping, and said the last word to its mother, and I do not care to confess that my eyes were not dry, as the 'Stadt Strasburg,' the steamer in which I was, shaped its course northward down the stream, and I had a last glimpse of the wife waving a handkerchief on the bridge."

On board the "Stadt Strasburg" our author finds himself almost in England, and passes away the voyage from Strasburg to Cologne in a pleasant gossip, with much about his fellow-passengers. There was a lord on board, and he does not fail to remark how eager all our beloved countrywomen were to get a

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sight of this great man, and what a noble interesting-looking creature they thought him. What a strange simple adulation it is that we pay to that picture of an English coronet ;—we who look down with such a grand contempt upon all foreign titles ; talking of swindling French counts, beggarly German barons, shabby Italian princes, with lofty indifference and scorn ! And yet is there any single person of the middle classes who reads this but would not be pleased to walk down Regent-street with a lord ? or any lady who will not confess that at the very minute of reading this she has a Peerage upon her drawing-room table ? There is no other country but ours where such a work is known ; and it would be curious to call for a return of the number of such books which have been sold to the middle classes for the last fifty years—to people who have not the slightest connexion with any one of the august families whose names and arms figure in that great book of reference—to people who never see a lord except in the park, or at the opera, and will die and never speak to one. The writer of this once asked the servant of an eminent Paris surgeon, who has much practice amongst the English there, to bring him a dictionary from the library. The man immediately brought back the Peerage. “ That’s the book,” said he, “ which *Messieurs les Anglais* always call for.” And there it was, the last edition of Mr. Burke’s national work,—not a year old,—but bearing strong evidences of having been well and frequently read. Is it not a fact that respectable families in the country have interleaved Peerages ? that they strike off the deaths and births of the aristocracy, and insert their marriages or other accidents in neat crowquill manuscripts ? Shakspeare, Debrett, and Mrs. Rundell, may be said to be the first books of the British genteel library : and, taken as a rule, the former is never read ; the latter often ; the second always. But let us hear the German tourist’s description of the lord who has given rise to this unwarrantable disquisition. His lordship is young it appears, and married to a ladyship, much older than himself, and evidently doting on him, and the noble pair

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are in the habit of travelling about with Italian greyhounds. From this description, and from their own intimate knowledge of the aristocracy, perhaps some of our readers can discover who really this nameless lord is.

“‘*Dear me,*’ said a somewhat ancient British spinster, ‘*is it indeed Lord—, what a fine and noble-looking man he is!*’ ‘*Yes,*’ answered her neighbour, ‘*after all there goes nothing beyond an English nobleman.*’ If his lordship and his companions had before been the subject of general conversation, now that his title was ascertained, he was still more watched. . . . Towards evening, the young lord presented himself once more upon the common show-place of our ship, but this time in a costume so different, that he could scarcely be recognised. His elegant travelling-dress of the morning had been exchanged for a sort of robe or talar, which almost swept the ground, and which was brilliantly illuminated with all the colours of the rainbow. The nobleman’s hips were bound by a girdle of brown silk, at the end whereof hung a couple of gigantic tassels; on his head was a cap which had a tolerable resemblance to a turban; and his lordship’s fair white hands glittered with rings, formed of diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, which, no doubt, were more valuable than the estates of many a German count. The chief ornament of our lord, however, consisted of a pipe, of which the head was of finest meerschaum, the pipe-stick being decorated with the richest amber, likewise from this depended a pair of tassels, wonderful in size and variety of colour. So accoutred, his lordship trod the deck with a measured step, blowing right and left from his pipe portentous clouds of tobacco into air, with a look of godlike ease, and an Oriental indifference, which, I am sure, Ali-Pacha himself cannot excel, as he sits cross-legged on his ottoman and smokes and sips his Moka. With the greatest pleasure did I watch the movements of the British nobleman, and could not but admire that grandeur of *nonchalance*, the true test of gentility, which his lordship had attained. But more delightful even than this sight, was it to behold the astonishment which was depicted on the countenances of the worthy English gentlemen and ladies on their stools and benches around—an astonishment occasioned not so much by the quasi-Turkish appearance which my lord now wore, as by the fact that that noble and beautiful mouth of his should be so polluted as to become a chimney for foul tobacco-smoke. As soon as my lord turned his back upon one of his countrywomen, the lady drew forth her handkerchief, and turning upon her nose in disgust, began flapping the kerchief to and fro, to drive the odious smoke from her. As may be imagined, the flapping was endless; and had not the smoker been Lord—, the whole British society on board would have risen at once,

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and called upon the captain instantaneously to remove the individual who sinned so against good manners.

"His lordship's appearance as a smoker was to me the cause of especial satisfaction. Some short time before his arrival, certain gentlemen had been amusing themselves with their pipes, although they did not in the least offend the English noses by so doing, having for the purposes of their enjoyment modestly betaken themselves to the lower deck, which, as it is known, none but *low people* frequent. This circumstance gave occasion to some English ladies, and my Insignificance, to hold a discourse upon smoking; in which dispute it was advanced on the British side that this habit was *exceedingly vulgar*, and that in England a person pretending to the title of a *gentleman* never would dare to indulge in it. Much also was discoursed regarding Germany and its love for the 'horrid weed,' in which epithet I could not myself concur, from patriotism in the first place, and also because to a good Havanna cigar I am not altogether unfriendly. But my fair islanders, who, be it remarked, were somewhat blue, and deep in German metaphysics—declared that tobacco smoke had had as much effect upon the modern philosophy of Germany, of late years, as steam had had upon the trade and manufactures of Great Britain; which reasoning, finding my patriotism growing too hot, I cut short by presently pointing out my lord as he came towards us puffing into our noses aromatic clouds from Kanaster of the best sort, and asking if his lordship was considered in England a gentleman?"

From the lord, our good-natured German goes to examine a dark, downcast, austere-looking personage in black, who, after sitting down in various parts of the ship, is observed in rising to leave little *büchelchen* behind him—*tractätchen* in a word (in English, tractikins); treating of *fluch* and *Höllenstrafen*, which words cannot be translated into polite English. The tractarian and the philosopher have a dispute together, in which the former as usual talked of the vanity of earthly pursuits, while the other insisted that the earth was divine and beautiful, good to study and dwell in; but it does not appear that either disputant was convinced by the other's argument, though to do the Englishman justice, he was ready to continue the fight, long after his opponent had given in. We have more amusing sketches on board, those for instance of two old maids, who have been making a continental tour for the first time in their

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lives, and of course measure all things by their "English or rather Yorkshirish" rule. These worthy dames were of opinion that the castles on the Rhine were merely Sham Ruins, that "no noblemen" could ever have inhabited such queer places, and that they were merely built for picturesque effect.

As in the last number of this periodical, it was related how Monsieur Victor Hugo travelling on the banks of the Rhine heard (besides the voices of his own proper reason), other celestial voices, which informed him that the left bank of the Rhine must inevitably be restored to France, it may be curious to know what conclusion a German draws from the sight of the self-same towns and provinces, which the Frenchman visited at about the same period.

"I had not seen the Rhine bank from Mainz to Cologne for fourteen years, and was curious to note the difference which time had occasioned: and indeed everywhere were to be seen marks of increasing prosperity, beauty, and progress. How much pleasanter have Mayence and Coblenz, Bonn and Cologne, become since the year 1825. The last city, especially, when I first saw it, gave me a by no means favourable impression: it appeared to me then to be dark, dirty, and ruinous; and I found it now exceedingly altered for the better. Many of the streets were now airy and light, which previously had been dismal and dark; many open squares and places stood now upon ground which formerly was covered with labyrinths of narrow lanes and alleys; there were handsome shops where poor booths stood formerly; and the people, as well as the houses, wore a more agreeable aspect, and seemed better clothed. In a word, a long peace had produced its beneficial consequences, and the effect of increased trade and careful government were visible everywhere.

"The Rhinelanders should thank Heaven daily, that it has once more in its grace united them to Germany, and released them from the yoke of France. What would their cities have been at the present moment had the Great Nation still governed them? No doubt, as other towns in France are, poor imitations of the capital—dull, empty, robbed of all characteristics of their own, dirty and neglected. And what would the Rhinelanders themselves be with the French to make sport of them, as they now do of the Alsacian, who, in spite of his attempts to imitate the Frenchman in speech and manners, passes only with the latter for a dullard, a butt for his jokes and his wit. I think the

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Rhinelanders know their own interest too well, have too much political foresight and patriotic feeling ever to think of separating from Germany, and reuniting with our hereditary enemy. I know them too well to believe what the journalists on the banks of the Seine are in the habit of presenting to their credulous vain countrymen, viz. that all German hearts on the banks of the Rhine are ripe for treason, and are only waiting the first opportunity to fling themselves into the arms of the French and to break through a union which is of a thousand years' duration. Can the Rhinelanders be more shamefully calumniated, or more deeply disgraced in the eyes of the world, than by attributing such designs to them ? "

French journalists, poets, and the like, who are in the habit of demanding their "natural frontier of the Rhine," would do well to reflect upon this passage, and upon a thousand similar ones, that the angry German press puts forth upon the question. Our German naturalist is not very just certainly—he speaks of France with contempt much too savage and bitter ; but it seems to be the genius of France of late years to raise such feelings against itself throughout Europe. It insults every country with which it has to deal, by absurd assumptions of superiority ; it threatens all with war, or discord, or invasion ; it shuts up its ports to foreign commerce ; and distrusting everyone, cheating where it can, bullying where it dares, and insolent always, it bewails the unfriendliness of Europe, and complains of unjust isolation. However, the French have the ingenuous habit of never listening to one single word that may be unfavourable to their own opinions ; and it is probable, that the protest of our friend, the *Naturforscher*, and his innumerable German brethren, will pass among them for mere outbreaks of individual spleen ; and that they will still think the Rhine is pining to be French again.

We must not, however, detain the reader too long upon the left bank of the Rhine, or with the author's hatred against the "Great Nation," but must follow the German naturalist to England ; in which country it becomes the reviewer's stern duty to say, that the naturalist is disposed to praise everything

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too much, as in France he was determined to blame. Suppose, for instance, that he has embarked from Rotterdam ; that he has been very ill upon the voyage (which calamity is described with much good-humour) ; that he has fallen asleep after his illness, and wakes next morning in a calmer sea, and with a great sea appetite. He forthwith breaks out into the following outrageous eulogium, which we doubt whether the most delicate meal at Tortonis would have elicited from him.

“ The surest sign of returning health was the strength of the appetite now awakened within us. With great pleasure we beheld preparations made for breakfast, and with still greater joy did we sit down to take a share of the same. And certainly for a hungry stomach, there is nothing more inviting and exciting, than an English *ship breakfast*. That he who enjoys it, truly breaks his fast, no one can deny. Juicy beefsteaks an inch thick, and half a foot long, plates of well-smacking MUTTON-CHOPS, gigantic cold roast-beef, soft-boiled eggs, snow-white bread, brown-golden roasted toast, gold-yellow butter, white and red radishes, and tea and coffee in immeasurable supplies : such are the usual ingredients of a breakfast given on board an English ship. I need hardly say that we did the fullest justice to this admirable meal, and amply made up the losses of the previous day. . . .

A man must be very grateful, and have a very good natural appetite, or be a very strong Anglomaniac indeed (both of which qualities and defects our author possesses), to speak in such terms of that abominable meal, a steam-boat breakfast. Could the naturalist have been seriously unwell the night before ? We doubt it : otherwise the very sight of the “ zolldicke und halbfusslange saftige *beefsteake* ” would never have delighted him as they did, and the “ wohlschmeckende *mutton-chops* ” would have affected him as they would every other refined mind first rising from the horrible couch of sea-sickness. We give this passage up to the French, as a proof of the blind and unjust admiration which the German Naturforscher exhibits for our country.

At any rate, if by chance there be any truth in the above description ; if there be any steam-boat sailing to and from

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Rotterdam, where the mutton-chops *do* smell well, where the snow-white bread is not stale, and the gold-yellow butter not rancid, where the immeasurable tea and coffee are not muddy and detestable and where they are supplied (as they should be) with a corresponding measure of milk, the Naturforscher ought to have told the name of the ship for the benefit of future travellers. Many a reader of this review is doubtless thinking of a tour Rhinewards at this very season, and would be thankful for the information.

Here, however, we have the name of an inn, which very few of our readers have probably frequented, and which they may try if so inclined, as it lies on the direct road between Grosvenor-square and Rotterdam.

"In the Ship Tavern in Water Lane then, we abused the Custom House at our leisure (I mean my original Englishmen and my own Insignificance), and there we spoke out our anathemas against douanes and duties, and all such accursed modern inventions. We did not, however, in our enthusiasm for free trade, and our anger against all bar to commerce, allow our appetite to go uncared for; but commenced a frightful attack upon a capital shoulder of mutton and an incomparable *beefsteak pie*, and were equally pitiless towards the *potatoes*, *vegetables*, and *rice-pudding*, which Mr. Bussy, who seemed to take great pleasure at the enormity of our appetites, laid on our table. With some bottles of *double-stout*, and a pint of particular port, we accompanied our substantial meal, and so restored our spirits after the voyage.

"My excellent companion,—who had in the course of a long stay upon the continent, contracted a love for certain foreign habits, and in the course of our voyage had not been a little satirical upon various customs of his own country,—felt, as he took his first meal upon English ground, all his *John-Bullism* and love of fatherland return, and in the height of his enthusiasm held out his glass towards mine, in continental fashion, clattered the two glasses together so hard that I thought they would break, and cried out '*Old England for ever!*'

"As I am by no means ill-disposed towards a country that has been so wrongly hated, I drank willingly enough to the health of the remarkable island; and with the more goodwill, because in two previous visits to the country I had gained an attachment for it, and made connections, to the renewal of which I warmly looked forward.

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Now English inn-rooms are generally very quiet, even when full of guests, who take their places between two partition-walls, separated from one another by some five or six feet, and containing two benches and a little table. This unsocial arrangement is called, I believe, by the English a box; a box can, if necessary, hold four persons, but is commonly only occupied by one. As soon as an Englishman enters the room, he examines the boxes before him, and chooses that one in which there may be no company. Here solitary, and unseen by his neighbours, he devours his beefsteak and potatoes, reading at the same time, very likely the gigantic *Times*, or some other English journal. The reigning silence is only broken by the clatter of knives and forks, the rustling of a newspaper, or the occasional cry of '*Waiter*.' Such a chamber was Mr. Bussy's, in Water-lane, and afforded a fair specimen of Old-English tavern-rooms.

"We, who were new comers, did not, however, conduct ourselves in our cell as the English are accustomed to behave. We talked, and perhaps more loudly than was quite requisite for the mere purposes of hearing; we laughed, and so loud that our laughter might be heard outside our box; nay, we clinked glasses after the German fashion: all which behaviour was so different to the customary English manners, that the frequenters of the room could not but pay attention to us; and some of them, in going out or entering, actually went out of their way in order to look into our box, and stare at the wonderful foreign wild-beasts that were there sitting and brawling.

"I must say, though, that in the behaviour of both of us there was on our parts a certain design. We both knew English customs too well not to have easily accommodated ourselves to them, so as not to sin against them if we thought proper. But it was pleasant to shock a little the score of beef-steak-devouring city Philistines round about, and at the same time to afford them the pleasure of contrasting their own superior elegance and gentility with our foreign rudeness; and I doubt not but that our end was fully attained, and that at tea-time that evening many a *shopkeeper's* family was entertained with an account of the *parcel of foreigners* in the Ship Tavern, and that we were flatteringly called *vulgar* and *low*.

"Being upon the subject of the Ship Tavern in Water-lane, let me here recommend that inn unreservedly to such of my readers as shall ever have occasion to visit the *custom-house* of London. The landlord, Mr. Bussy, is a most civil and honest host, taking every pains to make his guests comfortable. The house itself is by no means of the elegant sort, and the entrance to it is not particularly favourable. The situation, too, is dismal, and a ray of sunshine seldom visits the *Ship*: the rooms are small, and certainly not luxuriously furnished. I stayed

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several days in the house before I was familiar with the complicated architecture thereof; for little steps and narrow passages join and cross each other in the most extraordinary fashion, making quite a labyrinth of the place. Spite, however, of the thick atmosphere of fog and coal-smoke under which the house lies the whole year through, the house is cleanly kept; and I found myself as well treated there as it is possible to be in the neighbourhood of the Custom-house and the Thames.

" '*Rost-beef, beefsteaks, rost mutton, mutton-chops, veal,*' and fish, those cardinal dishes of the English kitchen, are here excellent, and *the bottled-ale and double stout* are of classic perfection. You may have, too, a good glass of port-wine; and even the coffee, in the confection of which the English as yet have attained no great skill, is here tolerable to a continental palate. And the reckoning which Herr Bussy demands from his guests must likewise be considered cheap for England: two shillings for a bed, one shilling and sixpence for a plentiful breakfast, two or at most three shillings for a dinner which at least suits my taste and satisfies my appetite better than a five-franc *diner* in the *Palais Royal*, are not prices of which one can complain; and there is many a Swiss landlord would wonder that they should be so low."

Is any one tired or annoyed that beer, whether strong or small, should be chronicled in this way? There are some, perhaps, who would expect a German natural philosopher to talk to them of much loftier subjects than Ship-taverns and steam-boat breakfasts, but such persons must be warned that the philosopher has kept his science for a scientific work (to which they can refer), and that he here wishes to unbend and talk like any simpleton. Other readers again, of a genteel taste, may object to descriptions of low society in Thames-street, of beef-steaks, bottled stout, and such vulgar articles of food. For the latter class of persons we have in store a circumstantial account of a repast served at the house of no less a man than the Right Hon. Baronet at present Prime Minister of England, and if this be not a respectable matter to speak of, what is? Being with the other sages of Europe at Birmingham, the Naturforscher received an invitation to Drayton Manor-house, whither he went in the company of several distinguished scientific men. There had been riots

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in Birmingham, and some question of pelting Sir Robert if he attended the association ; he wisely sacrificed any intention which he might have had of visiting this illustrious society, and contented himself with begging a few of the most celebrated Naturforschers to dinner at Drayton.

“ Your humble servant had the honour to be of the number of invited guests, and I scarcely need say that the invitation was not declined, for it gave me an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with a man whose name is closely united with the modern history of his country, and who may with justice be considered as one of the leading statesmen of Great Britain or of Europe. At the end of our sitting, that is at a very late hour in the afternoon, our little society, consisting of about twelve persons, took their places in one of the coaches of the Derby railroad, and though this road was ten miles longer than the ordinary one, yet it brought us more quickly to our goal. It was quite night, however, by the time we reached the Tamworth station, which is about two miles from Sir Robert's estate. Here we found waiting for us the elegant coaches of the Baronet, with a number of his brilliantly-clad domestics, and so after a brief pause the learned caravan moved forward to Drayton Manor-house. We reached our place of destination at about half-past eight, and Sir Robert received us at the door with the most friendly politeness. He led us through the large hall brilliantly lighted and covered with costly carpets, in which a great number of powdered red-cheeked serving-men, in short scarlet breeches, with silk stockings, buckles to their shoes and coats whereof the nature I forget, stood waiting in rank and file. Although dinner in England is taken at a very late hour, yet the time of our arrival was later even than the fashion, and the first thing we had to do in the Peelish house was to wash away the coal-dust from hand and face, and put on such a garment as was suitable to the table of our host. At 9 o'clock the dinner-bell rang, and our little society was soon assembled in the stately drawing-room, where collectively and individually we had the honour to be presented to Lady Peel by her husband. We were not long kept waiting for our meal ; our host, indeed, might imagine that we were in want of it ; and the glad summons ‘ dinner is ready ’ was speedily heard. Dr. Buckland offered his arm to our amiable, polished, and still beautiful hostess, and we followed after him in measured footsteps, taking our places at table as chance directed. However hungry our long fast might have made us, Sir Robert's board offered wherewithal to satisfy the most implacable appetite : it was only the choice of the dainties that could confuse us in

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any way. I am really grieved not to be able to give my gastronomic readers a full account of all the delicacies which were set before us. It would make their mouths water to hear of all that we ate of, especially when I say that every thing was dressed in the very best way possible, leaving to the most fastidious palate nothing to desire. Let the gourmand, however, be informed that all the natural kingdom, and all zones, had brought their richest tribute to the feast of which we that day partook in Drayton Manor-house."

For our part we honestly confess a regret that the Naturforscher did not give us the bill of fare. He must remember it, that is quite clear; no man ever spoke in such terms of a dinner without recollecting every dish he ate of; and why this squeamishness as to naming them? 'Tis not unworthy of a Naturforscher to like his dinner, and we can fancy a dozen of them, great stalwart hungry philosophers:—these from Trinity College, Cambridge (where the art of eating is not neglected); these, fellows from Oxford, where likewise the *magister artis ingenique largitor* is allowed the honour of his degree; yonder a lean and famished Yankee; and finally the Jolly German himself, who comes from a country where appetite enormously flourishes in spite of cookery:—indeed it must have been a great sight! As for the conversation, our friend says justly enough, in his waggish simple way, that, "at first it was not *sonderlich belebt*, not particularly lively; for who," says he, "could think about being witty or entertaining when he was perishing of hunger?" And as for the philosophers, "since 9 o'clock that morning they *had brought nothing over their tongues*," and their voracity may be imagined. "When the first attack upon beef, venison, grouse, and other good things, had been concluded, our tongues were loosed, and we thought about"—

About what does the reader suppose that the twelve sages thought, when their tongues were loosed and they had done eating? Why, when they had done eating they thought about—drinking:—and long life to all such philosophers, say we.

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"Then right and left you heard challenges to drink. *Will you do me the honour of taking a glass of wine with me? Will you drink a glass of wine with me? May I have the pleasure to take some wine with you?* and similar invitations were heard on all sides, followed naturally by an affirmative reply. Sir Robert's cellar was, it need scarcely be said, as well cared for as his kitchen; the finest Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian wines were here in abundance, as well as the choicest French wines, and Germany's best drink, the noble Johannisberger. The latter was no doubt from the best source, for Sir Robert and the possessor of the crown of all vineyards are old friends, and would willingly do each other a favour.

"Most people from the continent find the English habit of having a bottle for individual consumption, and the obligation to ask or to be asked by another to take wine, a disagreeable restraint. I for my part do not share this opinion, and consider the British custom as more social and less egotistic than ours, which gives no opportunity to friendly attentions as the former plan does. It gives the person who is challenged to drink the opportunity of selecting his wine (as other persons when challenged are free to choose their weapons), and so in the course of an English dinner one has the opportunity of tasting a considerable number of different wines. Port-wine and Madeira, Bourdeaux and Champagne, Rhine wine and Constantia, are all drunk indifferently, *in moderate measures, of course, and not in pint glasses*. It is superfluous to observe that ladies at table are not called upon to maintain the point (of honour) in drinking; you ask them to drink as well as the men, but naturally the lady is not bound to empty the filled goblet to the dregs; as soon as the rim of the bowl has touched the beautiful lip, and when the latter has sipped a drop or two of the liquid within, the woman's drink-duty is fulfilled, and so may every lady accept invitations to drink a dozen times and even oftener, without having any fear lest she should do too much of the good thing."

Here the honest professor goes off into a dissertation upon the absurd custom prevailing among continental ladies, who fancy it is an insult if at table you offer to fill their glasses: the English dames, he says, "in respect of drinking, are not so over-squeamish, having the reasonable notion that heaven made wine for women as well as for men; they will not therefore shrink from publicly drinking a little glass of port-wine or claret." And why should they, when philosophers as we see set them the example? How exquisite is that outbreak of

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natural philosophic eloquence which occurs, when the sages have done eating and begin to think of drinking. ‘Sir, a glass of wine! Will you *drink* a glass of wine? Will you *take* a glass of wine? Will you do me the honour to take *some* wine?—Noble variety of phrase! We know that Socrates and Plato were not averse to a cup, and can see in imagination Dr. Whewell and Dr. Buckland hobnobbing together. His Very Reverence Herr Peacock aus Ely calls on the Naturforscher to try a glass of the real Metternich Johannisberger; round about pass noiselessly “*dienstbarer geister in scharlachenen kurzen Beinkleidern* ;” and in the midst of the sages, Sir Robert, like a gallant Alcibiades urging Socrates to a bumper of champagne, or Plato to improve the sweet flow of his eloquence by a draught of the honeyed Constantia. “*Portwein und Bordeaux, Madera, und Champagner, Rhein-wein und Constantia alles wird untereinander hineingetrunken* ;” and properly grateful is our philosopher for the chance which the English custom gives him of mixing these delightful liquors—“of course in moderate glasses and not in pint-tumblers”—no, no, there is no philosophy, however deep, that can bear to be drunk out of *schoppengläser*..

The room which we could afford to devote to the German naturalist’s description of English society was but small, and we find that we have filled it completely with accounts of the eating and drinking which prevail in our happy country. The subject, however, is one that is not ungrateful to men of the world and the mere general reader; and we have pretty clear proof, from the above extracts, that men of science are likewise partial to it: where is the need then of an apology for having enlarged on it at some length? But it must not be supposed that the Naturforscher treats of eating alone: no, we have under our eyes, chapters headed—Faraday’s Laboratory—the Electric Cell—Buckland and Geology—On the Causes of the Beauty of the English Nation—the Progress of Catholicism in England—Wheatstone’s Voltaic Telegraph—Peeping Tom—Davy’s

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Journal—and five hundred other subjects, on which the good-natured German prattles in a kindly, shrewd, simple way. If he paints English society in a manner somewhat too flattering; if, in speaking of the condition of the people, he says that there is somewhere a little distress!—at least we cannot quarrel with him for being good-humoured, or for not describing what he has not seen. Many a traveller cannot be accused of the latter kind of neglect: and the German's trip to England was a holiday excursion, passed in sunshine and pleasure, amidst all sorts of feasts and recreations, scientific and bodily—Who shall be angry with him for speaking thus out of the mere fulness of the heart?

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By ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

THE most voluminous literary workman we know—out of our own happy country—is Monsieur Alexandre Dumas. We have notwithstanding the rare good fortune, here, to congratulate him on having laboured skilfully and to some purpose. We cannot but grieve that it will occur to us, before even our present number closes, to throw some less flattering light on his remarkably prolific style : but we are all the more anxious just now to do full justice to a book, in which the writer seems to have taken greater pains than on any former occasion to do justice to himself.

Monsieur Dumas has two elements in his nature—that of the dramatist, and that of the minute historian. By the union of these, in his more successful efforts, he has hoped to infuse a new spirit both into history and romance, vivifying the former, while he gives veracity to the latter. The union, however, has not been always complete : indeed he seems to assume either character alternately : and instead of being completely the historical romancist or the romantic historian, he exhibits himself by turns, as the thorough dramatic romancist and the thorough historian, not only in one and the same work, but in one and the same volume, in one and the same chapter. In spite of this peculiarity, or rather perhaps in consequence of this peculiarity, M. Dumas, when at his best, is capable of doing much in the way of rendering the general reader acquainted with a wide range of history. Not a mere artist, he has nevertheless in his historical tales been able at once to seize

on those dramatic "effects" which have so much distinguished his theatrical career, and to give those sharp and distinct reproductions of character which alone can present to the reader the mind and spirit of an age ;—not a mere historian, he has nevertheless carefully consulted the original sources of information, has weighed testimonies, elicited theories, and, at the risk of tediousness, has interpolated the poetry of history, with its most thorough prose. Had he been more of the artist, he would have paused ere he interrupted the chain of his narrative with the detailed history of a period, and we should have lost much of the curious and well-arranged information of the careful compiler. Had he been more of the historian, the vivid touches which impart such a charm to his writings, and give them a deeper truth than that which is conveyed by the mere record of names and dates, would have been wanting. Those who only know Dumas by his inaccuracies when treating of English subjects in a dramatic form, as for instance in his play of "Kean," may smile incredulously at this mention of his carefulness; but let any impartial reader take his *Crimes Célèbres*, and observe his careful reference to authority, his skilful records of history, his scrupulous adherence to the chain of events, and it will be found that praise in this respect is not wrongly bestowed.

Under the head of *Crimes Célèbres*, M. Dumas has collected a remarkable race of heroes and heroines. He has not confined himself to age or country. It is enough for him that an individual has been criminal, and has been celebrated, to find a nook in his four volumes. The ambitious criminal of the middle ages, who sweeps away the human obstacles in his path by doses of mysterious poison; the profligate criminal of the time of Louis XIV., who stabs a lady that *will* be virtuous, or steals an heir to come into possession of an estate; the high-souled German criminal, who from a mistaken notion rids the world of a contemptible politician; and the cold-blooded Russian criminal, who sees her lover lifeless before her, yet refuses to utter a sound of grief aloud, lest it may compromise her honour

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—all these are subjects of M. Dumas's very interesting work. Each of these forms the nucleus of a short tale, or history : either of which it may be called, accordingly as the character of the author as an artist or a chronicler (and in every tale he appears in both these characters distinctly) is taken into consideration. In all these narratives there is a similarity of form ; in all of them the author darts at first *in medias res*, and forms a striking dramatical group : and in all of them likewise does he soon drop into the orderly narrator. It is a peculiarity of M. Dumas that his strongest " effect " is invariably at the opening of his story.

In respect to dates, the first of his criminals is the unfortunate Queen Giovanna of Naples—the Mary Queen of Scots of the fourteenth century, charged with a similar crime, and about whose character there are as many conflicting opinions. Dumas boasts of his accuracy in the history of this sovereign, having consulted all the Italian chroniclers of the dreadful events of her reign, particularly Domenico Gravina ; and though he makes her guilty of the death of her husband, he represents her rather as misled than of a depraved disposition ; and while admitting her crime, keeps it in the background. Our own conviction, based upon the testimonies of Boccacio, Petrarch, and Giannone, is that the Queen of Naples was innocent ; but as we do not wish to enter upon a long and perhaps profitless discussion at present, we will take the narrative of M. Dumas as he has given it.

Poor Giovanna, living in a most unconscientious period, had the misfortune to possess a most conscientious grandfather. The voluptuousness and violence of an age of semi-civilization—the age of Petrarch and Boccacio, and of racks and red-hot pincers—imbued the atmosphere which she breathed. Evil advisers and evil companions had laid the train which was to ruin the lovely victim, but it was the virtuous grandfather that fired it. On the death of Charles II. of Naples, in the beginning

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of the fourteenth century, Caribert, son of the eldest son of Charles, who had died king of Hungary, and Robert, the eldest living son, contested the crown. The Pope decided in favour of Robert : but though his decision was not only given with that spiritual authority which had such weight in a superstitious age, but also with the temporal authority of feudal lord of Naples, the conscience of the scrupulous Robert, called the "Wise," was not satisfied ; and he felt he was fulfilling an imperative duty by turning the Angevin succession again into that direct line from which, in his person, it had deviated. The plan he fixed upon was the marriage of Giovanna, his granddaughter and heiress, with Andreas of Hungary, youngest son of Caribert. Never did good intentions produce a more disastrous result. The spoiled child of the south, and the uncouth son of the north, detested each other from the depths of their hearts : one joyed in the luxuries of a court life, the other revelled only in the delights of the chase, and mutual contempt was all that could be expected from the nature of the two characters.

It is with the deathbed of Robert that M. Dumas opens his narrative, and with a masterly hand groups round it all the characters who are to take a part in the tremendous tragedy that follows in which all the Neapolitan branch of the House of Anjou seem as if they had gathered there for the sole purpose of destroying each other. Giovanna is described with large black eyes, with glossy raven locks, with a delicate mouth and open brow, the *ensemble* conveying an impression of gentleness and melancholy. She was so beautiful, says M. Dumas, that her dying grandfather took her for an angel sent by God to console him in his agonies. Near her is her sister Mary, attended by a *clique* of persons, who, though not of the royal family, become frightfully prominent, both for their crimes and their terrible end. These are Filippa, the grand seneschal and governess of the princesses ; with her son Robert, the count of Terlizzi ; and Dona Cancia, a profligate lady of the court. The uncouth husband of poor Giovanna, Andreas of Hungary ;

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and Brother Robert, his priestly tutor; form the second group. The third consists of the Tarentine branch of the royal family. The deceased prince of Tarento was brother to Robert of Naples; and the family he has left consists of Catherine, his widow, granddaughter of the Greek emperor, Baldwin II.; and her three sons, Robert, Philip, and Louis. The Durazzo branch forms the fourth group: consisting of Agnes, widow of Charles, duke of Durazzo and Albania, another brother of Robert of Naples; and her sons, Charles, Louis of Gravina, and Robert, prince of Morea. The counts of Artois, Charles and his son Bertrand, and the wife of King Robert, complete the assemblage. The "wise" king died proclaiming Giovanna and Andreas heirs to the throne of Naples; but no sooner was the breath out of his body, than the kingdom began to divide itself into a Neapolitan and Hungarian faction. From various motives every branch of the royal family, besides the family of the governess Filippa, had regarded Giovanna with a wistful eye, whether from motives of love or of ambition; and all, however opposed to each other, united in showing disrespect to the young Hungarian, who had to contend with the designs of his ambitious kinsmen, and with the antipathy of a nation. To her son Robert had the governess, according to M. Dumas' authorities, already betrayed the virtue of her pupil Giovanna, who soon became disgusted with the insolence of this juvenile paramour, and sought for solace in the more tender devotion of Bertrand of Artois. Charles of Durazzo, one of those specimens of unscrupulous policy and cruelty which one marvels to find out of the Borgia family, was another candidate for the affections, and also for the hand of Giovanna: since as for Andreas, he was only regarded as a troublesome incumbrance, who might be removed at pleasure. Circumstances, however, marshalled out the heads of the two contending factions in a way which had not been at first anticipated: for Charles of Durazzo, disgusted with the indifference of Giovanna, courted an intimacy with Andreas and became one of the

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heads of the Hungarian party ; while the Neapolitans were headed by the princes of Tarento. The dislike which had long been fostered by the two sovereigns of Naples now produced an open rupture. Giovanna and Andreas both performed acts as if possessed each of sole power, and at last the Neapolitan party, whom Giovanna had joined, resolved on the death of Andreas.

Charles of Durazzo was, as Dumas says, not one to whom the love of a woman or the life of a man would appear of any moment, when placed in the career of his ambition ; nor was he one on whose conscience the dying injunctions of an old king would make any particular impression. The old king Robert had declared Mary, the sister of Giovanna, the heiress of several of his demesnes ; and had ordered that she should marry either Louis, King of Hungary, or the grandson of the King of France : but Charles of Durazzo, having failed in obtaining Giovanna, had resolved on possessing Mary ; and accordingly, on the 28th of March, 1343, the young lady, to the alarm of her sister, was missing. The mystery continued for about a month, and the court could only suspect and mourn, when everybody was astonished by the reappearance of Mary, from the palace of Durazzo, and she was married to Charles at the church of San Giovanni at Naples, amid the greatest splendour. The permission of the Pope, Clement VI., had been obtained for this extraordinary marriage ; and much as it might be disliked, it could only be opposed in suppressed murmurs. Party feeling in the meanwhile became more violent. It was a sort of chivalry on the part of the Neapolitan nobility to sympathise with Giovanna, and Bertrand of Artois was too successful a lover not to declare for the party of his royal mistress, and to offer himself as an instrument of vengeance against the origin of all her calamities, the unfortunate and doomed Andreas. The Neapolitan people also hated the soldiers of the Hungarian, and the quarrels in the low resorts of debauchery were the echoes of the bickerings of the court. Each of the contending powers, that is, Giovanna and her husband ; seemed to

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be promised exclusive sway: and, in short, all seemed ripening for some desperate act. The Counts of Artois, the terrible governess with all her family, the Empress of Constantinople, and the Queen herself (if this version of the tale is to be credited), had conspired to murder Andreas; and Charles of Durazzo, apparently his friend, had secretly promoted the scheme. A hunting expedition was selected for the occasion, and a convent at Aversa was the scene where the great crime, that was to entail such misery on all concerned in it, was perpetrated. At this convent Andreas and all the court, chiefly composed of the conspirators against his life, passed the night which was to precede several days spent in the pleasures of the chase. Early in the morning that followed this fatal night, Andreas was aroused by repeated knocks at the door of his chamber, and no sooner, according to Gravina's account, did he show himself, than all the conspirators darted upon him at once and attempted to strangle him. The reason they did not adopt a more expeditious method of ridding themselves of a noxious rival, seems to have been, that they supposed he was in possession of a charm which protected him against the effects of steel and poison. With tremendous courage did he defend himself against the attempts of his assassins. He endeavoured to regain his chamber, but a creature of Durazzo's prevented his retreat by thrusting his dagger as a bolt into the staples of the door. Bertrand of Artois dragged him to a balcony, which overlooked a garden, and from that he was hung by a cord, which, according to Dumas' narrative, was made by his wife of silk and gold.

No sooner was this murder accomplished, than Charles of Durazzo, who had acted in it by secret agents alone and was left at liberty to espouse what party he pleased, placed himself at the head of the Hungarians; to excite the indignation of whom he kept exposed for two entire days the body of poor Andreas. The semi-savages, devoted to their master, could utter but one cry, and that was a cry for vengeance: while

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Charles, availing himself of his power, and being, in right of his wife Mary, heir to the throne of Naples in case Giovanna should die without issue, attempted to exercise an absolute sway over the Queen, exacting from her that she should not marry again without his consent, and should make him Duke of Calabria, the title which had been borne by her father. Giovanna writhed beneath the insolence of her haughty relation, and the Empress Catherine, by a detestable scheme, offered to avenge her wrongs. Charles of Durazzo was made to believe that his mother, long since a widow, was pregnant, and to remove the stain from the family honour, he became a matricide, murdering the only virtuous woman that existed in one of the most profligate courts that the world has ever known. But Charles, though cast down, was not crushed; and the revenge he took on those of his enemies of the court who fell within his reach, was attended with all that refinement of cruelty which would lead us to believe that the tyrants of the middle ages were epicures in their vindictiveness. Taking upon himself the character of avenger of Andreas, he found an easy ally in the Pope, and a bull was addressed to the justiciary of Sicily, ordering him to proceed with the utmost severity against the murderers. At the same time the Pope was not so thorough an abettor as Charles could have desired; for he gave secret directions to the justiciary, perfectly in accordance with the principles of the time, to reserve his tortures for the more humble participators in the crime, while those of the blood-royal were to pass unnoticed.

Then began the series of horrors to which the murder of Andreas was the horrible introduction. The unfortunate criminals—that is to say, those whom the justiciary was alone allowed to touch—were tortured against the mast of a galley, to the great diversion of the people in general, and of Charles of Durazzo in particular, who was in all his glory, and wore a black garment to feign sorrow for the murdered Hungarian. Joyfully would he have heard the

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denunciation of the royal assassins from the humbler culprits ; every moment was to him a moment of vindictive expectation ; but the cunning justiciary had attached a fish-hook to the tongue (!) of each of the victims, and no matter how their fortitude might quail beneath the tortures which were inflicted upon them, they were at least prevented from doing any mischief by their confessions. The governess and all her family,—the son to whom she had betrayed Giovanna, her two daughters, the eldest not above nineteen, and their husbands,—were all executed ; and as they had before been tortured on the pretext of extorting a confession, so were they now, in mere wantonness, tortured on their way to the burning pile, amid the savage exultations of the populace, who at last dragged their bones from the blazing heap to make trinkets in memory of the occasion.

But the great culprits did not escape with impunity. Providence seems to have marked out destruction for all who were concerned in the death of the uncouth, and unpolished, but innocent Andreas. Bertrand and Giovanna at once became disgusted with each other, from their participation in the horrible crime, and the affections of the queen were transferred to Louis of Tarento, the younger son of the Empress Catherine. Again was Naples torn into two factions, at the head of one of which was Charles of Durazzo, while Louis led the other. Louis himself was unconnected with the murder of Andreas ; but his mother had been one of the leaders of the conspiracy, nor did she show any inclination to recede from her career of guilt. Her son needing money to resist his formidable opponent, the readiest expedient was to plunder the old Count of Artois, Charles, who on the first outbreak of vengeance against the murderers of Andreas had fled to the fortress of St. Agatha. Catherine undertook the delicate mission ; visited the fortress at the head of a party of soldiers ; robbed the wealthy old man of the whole of his vast property, at the loss of which he died of a broken heart ; while his son Bertrand, the former paramour of Giovanna, hanged himself.

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Though by this audacious proceeding the court party suddenly found themselves possessed of immense wealth, their difficulties were not over yet. Charles of Durazzo, acting as Ludovico of Milan did in a subsequent age, and with equal want of foresight, invited Louis King of Hungary, the elder brother of Andreas, into Naples, hoping that he had secured an ally, whereas he had only attained a destroyer. The entrance of Louis of Hungary was one of those events which have been considered as scourges for the punishment of a guilty race. The court of Naples trembled at his approach: Giovanna presented Louis of Tarento to her barons as her husband, and made them take the oath of fidelity to him; but the army of Hungary progressed, and was not to be retarded in the work of vengeance. No sooner had the Hungarian reached Benevento, than envoys from Naples waited upon him to swear their allegiance, and the unhappy Giovanna and her husband Louis fled for Provence. At Aversa, the scene of the murder of Andreas, did Charles of Durazzo and Robert of Tarento, as the eldest representatives of two branches of the royal family, meet Louis of Hungary, with all the desire of further conciliating him by the most implicit obedience. They were received with the greatest civility and kindness, and Charles of Durazzo was completely blinded to the fate that was prepared for him. In vain had he been as secret as possible in furthering the designs of the conspirators against Andreas; in vain had he most forcibly disclaimed connexion with them, by inflicting tortures on all that he could reach: the King of Hungary regarded him as his brother's murderer, and, entrapped at Aversa, he was beheaded by Hungarian soldiers under circumstances which would call for pity, were not the sentiment utterly unfitted for this disgrace to the human species. On went the King of Hungary like an Atilla in miniature. His entry into Naples was a triumph, and the most wholesale vengeance on the enemies of his brother attended it. Razors, wheels, and red-hot pincers, the curse of the middle ages and the delight of

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M. Dumas, were again in requisition ; and the means which Durazzo had used partly as a feint, were adopted with a thorough sense of enjoyment by the avenger of the north.

During this time, Provence was the scene of a triumph of another kind. The beauty, the misfortunes of Giovanna, had conspired to give her an interest in this native land of poetry and romance. At Avignon the reception of her and her husband was magnificent : songs to her praise were chanted in her path ; the bells rang as at a solemn festival of the church ; the Pope, Clement VI., gave the warmest welcome : and in short the reception was such as should have been offered to a spirit descended from a purer region, rather than to one on whom suspicion, at least, had fixed a murder, which even in an age used to horrors had been regarded as an act of unparalleled atrocity. As if these honours were not enough, a still greater triumph awaited her : and the endeavour of her terrible enemy of Hungary to destroy, only made her shine forth with greater lustre. King Louis sent ambassadors to Avignon to demand the condemnation of the queen ; and the heroine, for so she must be called, pleaded her own cause. The Pope was the judge, the ambassadors from Hungary were the accusers, and all the ambassadors from Europe were present at this wonderful trial.

" Her gait," says Dumas, " was at once so modest and so proud, her brow so melancholy and so pure, her look so full of *abandon* and of confidence, that all hearts were on her side before she spoke. Giovanna was then twenty years of age, was in the full bloom of her magnificent beauty ; but the brilliancy of her transparent satin skin was tempered by extreme paleness, and her sunken cheeks bore the marks of suffering and remorse. She spoke with a voice trembling with emotion, stopping from time to time to dry her moistened and brilliant eyes, or to heave one of those sighs which go directly to the heart. With such a lively grief did she recount the death of her husband, with such frightful truth did she depict the utter confusion with which she had been seized, and with such energy of despair did she clasp her hands to her forehead as if distracted at the terrible event, that the whole assembly trembled with horror and compassion. And indeed, at this

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moment, if her recital was false, her anger was real and terrible. An angel blasted by crime, she lied like Satan, but also, like Satan, she was torn by the infinite tortures of pride and of remorse."

The result of the affair was that Giovanna was declared innocent; that her marriage, which had been a very doubtful union, was confirmed by the Pope; and that the Hungarian ambassadors retired in confusion. The plague, of which Boccacio has left us so complete a description, was a new ally in the cause of Giovanna; as it frightened the King of Hungary out of Naples, where already the execrations of an oppressed people had reached to such a height that he had cause to tremble for his safety. The affection of the Neapolitans for their beautiful queen now ripened into an open declaration in her favour, and Naples echoed with the cry of "Long live Giovanna! Down with the Hungarians!" Yet these favours of fortune were but temporary; the King of Hungary again triumphed; he returned to attack his rival, and Giovanna was once more in peril. Louis of Tarento, who had much of that chivalrous generosity which was the only virtue of this detestable age, challenged the rival Louis to single combat, hoping thus to save the life of his subjects. The Hungarian, as a *preux chevalier*, could not refuse the challenge, but he contrived to make it a nullity by starting difficulties as to the judges before whom the combat should take place. His army continued victorious; he entered Naples as a conqueror; but he again found his most formidable opponent in the devotion of the people to their sovereign, and with dominion apparently in his grasp, he was driven to make a peace with Giovanna, on no other condition than that she should pay the expenses of the war.

But Giovanna, though she survived the unfortunate Andreas many years, was not to find a time of repose. The rebellion of Louis of Durazzo occupied Louis of Tarento, who no sooner triumphed over him, and made him a prisoner for life, than he himself fell a victim to a life of indulgence. Jaimè of Aragon,

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son of the king of Majorca, and Otho of Brunswick, were then successively husbands of Giovanna, who, in the lifetime of the latter, lost all her influence by supporting the anti-pope Clement VII. against Urban VI. The people were now against her. Urban declared that her crown was forfeited, and assigned it to a younger Charles of Durazzo, the son of Louis, whom she had preserved when his father perished miserably in a dungeon. Gratitude was as nothing when ambition prompted. Charles being now the conqueror, wrote to the King of Hungary to know what was to be done with Queen Giovanna, and the result was, according to the common account, that she was smothered by a feather-bed, and according to the more artificial narrative of Dumas, that she was strangled with the silken cord which she had made for Andreas.

This mass of crimes, connected with the death of Andreas; this complication of deceit, cruelty, and lust; is viewed through a dim medium: it is a horrible drama that is acted in the far distance: but on the next heroes of Dumas—that is next in point of date, for they are the first in the order of his work—the infamous Borgia Family, the light of history shines clearly.

The period at which this viperine brood played its fantastic tricks is as nearly as possible the transition between the middle ages and modern history: and certainly, if there be any one who talks of “good old times” under the impression that by retrograding a few centuries he will find virtue advancing in a proportionate degree, he will do well to ponder over the history of the Borgias, whose villainies were not transacted in secret, but in an arena round which sat the whole civilized world, who regarded the frightful exploits with more or less applause. A king of France (Louis XII.) could be found living to patronize a wretch like Cesar Borgia; and the historian of Florence, though he shuddered with pious horror at the deeds of Agathocles and Vitelli Vitellozzo, mentioned, in the chapter of his “Prince” immediately preceding, the Duke of Valentinois

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as a perfectly wise prince : unlucky to be sure, and on one occasion committing a blunder, which with Machiavelli, as with Fouché, was worse than a crime : but still on the whole highly to be commended. The unholy trio—Pope Alexander VI. who had gained the chair of St. Peter by the most unblushing simony, his daughter Lucrezia, and his son Cesar—were a choice assemblage, who had assumed a right to indulge in all the odious want of faith of miserable modern intriguers, as well as in all the odious excesses and nameless vices of a Nero and a Tiberius : indeed, it is doubtful whether the worst character in Suetonius would not have paused awhile before he associated with Cesar Borgia.

In vain it is to look for a single oasis in the desert of vice perpetrated by this monster, whose private and public life was equally detestable, but who unfortunately possessed an affable exterior, capable of gaining upon all whom he accosted. Strange to say, historians have differed as to the appearance of this remarkable personage ; some considering him as a prodigy of ugliness, while others have bestowed the highest laudations of his beauty. M. Dumas has hit upon a method of reconciling accounts so opposite, by supposing that in the spring he was covered with disgusting pimples, while, during the rest of the year, the absence of this disfigurement left him handsome. To his eyes, all are agreed in giving a most formidable appearance : describing them as shining with a constant lustre, in which there was something of the infernal. Acting on the principle of his motto, by which he declared that he would be "*Aut Cæsar aut nihil*," he was the very man to effect all that could be effected, supposing an utter absence of virtue and conscience. He was well exercised in feats of arms, he was a capital horseman, he even possessed the accomplishment of cutting off a bull's head with a single stroke : in short, he had all the physical virtues of chivalry. His deficiency in its softer virtues may be gathered from the circumstances that when he became tired of a mistress, he was in the habit of flinging her,

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with her hands tied behind her, into the Tiber ; and that in the pillage of Capua, out of three hundred of the most noble ladies of the city, he selected forty (!) for himself, and delivered the rest to his army.

The time when the Borgias flourished was an important period in the history of Europe. Alexander profited by the state of affairs that attended the early campaigns of the French in Italy : those campaigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., which formed a sort of prelude to the wars of the Emperor Charles V. and King Francis I., at a subsequent epoch. By a rapid series of intrigues carried on during the two abortive attempts of the French Kings to possess Naples ; by plotting with Bajazet, the Emperor of Turkey, to destroy his brother Djem, and with Charles VIII. to preserve the same Djem, as a pretext for making war on Bajazet ; the head of the Church contrived to keep himself and his children in a constant career of aggrandizement : and however Fortune might use contending parties, the Borgias were at least pretty sure to pick up something in the bustle. Cesar, already infamous by his amours with his sister Lucrezia, and by the murder of his brother, the Duke of Gandia, who was a rival in her affections, first rose to decided eminence in the time of Louis XII. ; who having a deformed wife, of whom he wished to be freed, was ready to pay the Pope any price, reasonable or unreasonable, for a divorce. Cesar was appointed negotiator in this delicate affair, and proceeded to France with an apparel "worthy," says Dumas, "of the son of a pope who goes to marry the daughter of a king : " meaning Carlotta, daughter of the King of Naples, the intended wife of Cesar, who had laid aside the ecclesiastical habit he wore in his youth, and was created, by the King of France, Duke of Valentinois. On this occasion, however, the king had reckoned too much on the consent of Carlotta to a marriage of mere policy, for nothing could induce the lady to wed the hateful Cesar Borgia. She vowed that she would never take for a husband one who was not only a priest, but the son

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of a priest; not only an assassin, but a fratricide; not only infamous by birth, but still more infamous from his actions. Fortunately for Cesar all other ladies were not equally scrupulous, and in about four months after the commencement of his visit he was married with great pomp to the daughter of the King of Navarre, and received the order of St. Michael. He was, moreover, promised assistance in vanquishing the "vicars of the Church," as a number of petty tyrants in Romagna were called, who had usurped their different cities and fortresses during the sojourn of the popes at Avignon, and had received an investiture from the emperor, and subsequently by the Pope, so that a possession originally a wrong was converted into a right. This right was however not such as to prevent the longings of the pontiff, who continued to find out breaches of the treaty between vassal and suzerain, sufficient to warrant a forfeiture of the fiefs; and it was with the office of receiving these for himself that the Duke of Valentinois was charged.

His career through Romagna was one of conquest and atrocity. The different strongholds fell one by one before him, and the victories that he obtained by the assistance of France and his own unscrupulous valour, acquired a sanctity from his father the Pope, who resolved that his entrance into Rome, which took place in the course of his achievements, should be a triumph. Keeping up the character of Cæsar which his own vanity and the coincidence of his name had induced him to assume, he entered the ancient imperial city clad in the old Roman costume: his hair was crowned with laurel, lictors surrounded him, and his banners glittered with the inscription, *Aut Cæsar aut nihil*, which with him warranted the perpetration of every species of enormity. Though it would be beyond the limits of an article like this to follow the abominable conqueror through all his petty victories, there is one stroke of policy, highly characteristic of the man, which is well worth recording, especially as it is looked upon by Machiavelli, in his "Principe," as an extraordinary display

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of talent. At Cesena, which was one of his new possessions, he found his subjects so turbulent that he selected Ramiro d' Orco, a remarkably severe governor, to keep them in order. Honest Ramiro fulfilled his duty to the very letter, and being a conscientious man was cruel enough even to satisfy the cravings of a Borgia, for he executed a sixth part of the inhabitants. It was no fault of his that the system did not work well ; but so it was ; and the murmurs of the people of Cesena seemed to prognosticate danger. Cesar therefore, wishing to reap all the advantage of his governor's tyranny, was equally anxious that that gentleman should bear all the unpopularity, and he had accordingly only to sacrifice the governor to become the favourite of the populace. Accordingly when the inhabitants of Cesena rose one morning, the first thing they beheld was Ramiro cut into quarters and placed on a scaffold, while his head on a pike formed a crown to the whole.

The lieutenants of Cesar, in Romagna, became at length too strong to remain in submission to him, and a conspiracy was formed, the results of which Machiavelli has described in a small treatise* devoted to that subject alone. Vitellozzo Vitelli, who had formerly been Cesar's right hand, was at the head of the plot ; in which Paul Orsino and five others were concerned ; and all pledged themselves to resist the progress of the duke. He, on the other hand, resolved not only to suppress the movement, but to exterminate its authors : and finding, even with the fresh assistance he had obtained from his constant ally the King of France, that he was not strong enough to pull them down by force, he had recourse to dissimulation, in which he was so great a master ; feigned a reconciliation ; made a treaty with the conspirators ; and seemed to pass over the affair so lightly, that all were anxious

* "Descrizione del modo tenuto dal Duca Valentino nell' amazzare Vitellozzo Vitelli," &c.

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to rush into his arms excepting his old acquaintance Vitelli, who knew him too well to believe that he could forget an injury, or that he would lack the means to avenge one. The whole plan of Cesar was to decoy his enemies into an interview, and when they met him at the place appointed, which was Sinigaglia, they were surrounded by his soldiers and strangled.

But the stroke of misfortune which was to sweep Cesar from the surface of the earth—the misfortune which the kind-hearted Machiavelli sees so much reason to lament—was now nearly at hand, and he who had successfully pursued the career of his ambition, was now doomed to fall a victim to his father's financial schemes. The Borgia System of Finance was at once simple and expedite : the mind had not to toil in weighing the advantages of direct and indirect taxation ; to trouble itself about high and low tariff : without a single maximum of political economy the papal coffers could be filled to repletion. The great instrument in this financial policy was a certain poison, the secret of which remained in the Borgia family, and which, it is said, existed in two forms, the solid and the liquid. The art of making the first is unluckily lost, but the recipe of the second is on record, probably preserved by some Mrs. Glasse of the art. “ Give a boar a strong dose of arsenic, and at the moment when the poison begins to act, hang up the animal by the hind-feet ; he will now be convulsed, and an abundance of foam will run from his throat. This foam collected in a silver plate, and decanted in a bottle hermetically sealed, will form the liquid poison.” Thus armed with two kinds of venom, the Borgias had all their own way, as far as the removal of obnoxious personages was concerned ; and an unlucky wight had only to render himself an object of suspicion, when a genteel invitation to supper finished his mortal career. But to return to the financial scheme. Pope Alexander, with his poisons, had a constant power of creating vacancies among his cardinals, and it was in filling up these that he found such a splendid source of profit. In the first place, the priest nominated to the office of cardinal left

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his former charges vacant, and these reverted to the Pope, who sold them. This was item the first. Item the second, being the round sum which the happy priest paid for the cardinalate. Enough was not yet gained. An advantage was taken of the law according to which no cardinal could bequeath his property, and the Pope had only to pick out the richest of the college, and treat him with a Borgia supper, when the third sum found its way into the treasury. Thus did the great financier, whose head is offered as a study in every treatise on phrenology, make three distinct gains out of one single operation. Nevertheless, simple as the plan was in a financial point of view, it required care in the execution : and one fatal day, when the Pope had fixed upon Cardinal Casanova, Melchior Copis, and Adrian de Corneto, as the guests who were to enrich the public purse, and pay the expenses of private orgies, the "home-brewed" was taken, by mistake, by Alexander himself and his worthy son. The aged sinner, loaded with every crime that even a depraved imagination could create, was soon lodged in his grave : but Cesar had a tremendous constitution, and the infernal composition which had destroyed numbers, though it impaired his energies, was not mortal. Never did limpet stick more tightly to a rock, than this valuable member of society clung to the world. It is said that a "bath of blood" was adopted that Cesar might still exist. A bull, according to this record, was suspended by its legs to four posts ; a large gash was cut in its belly, from which its entrails were taken while it was yet living ; and into the cavity thus left the patient stepped to bathe !

But though Cesar lived, his fortunes were shattered, as well as his constitution. The papal influence had sustained him, and that gone, nothing could save him from a precipice. No sooner was the breath out of Alexander's body, than the hatred against the family broke out everywhere with the greatest violence. Not a Borgia ventured to show his face but one, and that one was recognised by Fabio Orsino, who well remembering the affair of Sinigaglia, stabbed him, and exhibited his savage

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exultation by washing his hands and mouth in his blood. Cesar was mighty in his downfall : he could still give away a popedom ; he still bound close to him his old ally Louis, by promising to aid him in conquering Naples : but the King of Spain at once weakened his force, by declaring guilty of high treason every one of his subjects who should aid the duke. Alexander's successor, Pius III., was a mere creature in the hands of Cesar ; but the Orsini, who were industrious in the pursuit of vengeance, removed him after a reign of twenty-six days, by telling a physician to put a poisoned plaster on a wound in his leg. Again did Cesar, by his weight in the college of cardinals, give away the popedom ; and it was by his will that Julian della Rovera, the ancient enemy of the Borgias, became Pope Julius II. But his career was over. First a prisoner in Italy, he became a prisoner in Spain ; being entrapped by the "great Captain," Gonzalvo of Cordova ; and having escaped from confinement, he was killed in a miserable skirmish in Navarre, where he had espoused the arms of the king against a rebellious vassal.—Such was the obscure end of the celebrated Cesar Borgia.

In those days the art of poisoning was in its lustihood. The destroyers of human life scarcely made a secret of their work. The victims died, and it was generally suspected how they died but the criminals sat in too high places to care for the opinion of the people. Afterwards the performers of poisoning were more humble. The splendid secrets of the Borgias and the Medici, which could kill with all the refinement of science : the drug playing with the victim, as a cat with a mouse : now allowing him to recover, now giving him a fresh paroxysm, till he breathed his last : these secrets descended to lowly individuals who worked in obscurity, and struck in the dark ; who hugged their frightful arcana with the same devotion that rivets an alchemist to his crucible ; who to the malignity of the fiend, joined the scientific curiosity of the experimentalist ; and

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exulted while they saw a life wasted, to observe a theory realized.

Such a depository of the art of death was the Italian Exili, who found proselytes in Paris towards the end of the seventeenth century, and whose pupil was the Chevalier Sainte Croix, the hero of the romance of which the notorious Marchioness St. Brinvilliers is the heroine. Chance had introduced the poisoner of Italy to the gallant of France, who in the secrets of his preceptor found a ready mode of making a fortune, while the teacher seems to have thought himself sufficiently rewarded the finding one who could turn his theories to a practical account. The chevalier could sell death as a physician offers to sell life, and he had this advantage, that he could always be true to his bargain. Did unrewarded merit sigh for a vacancy, the chevalier, on payment of a fee, would undertake to remove the incumbent. This was with him a matter of business. But then he was a man of science also. The chevalier was attached to his profession ; he would have enlarged the sphere of his knowledge : he had read in ancient chronicles of poisoned napkins and poisoned gloves, which killed by mere contact, and, learned as he was, he regretted that he had not reached this point yet. But he did not despair. Renewed experiments might supply a deficiency which his preceptor, Exili, had left. To work he went at his furnace, a mask of glass covering his face, while he stooped over a fuming vessel of which every exhalation was death. Why is not Sainte Croix recorded among the " martyrs of science " ? The mask dropped from his face, and he fell dead, as if struck by a thunderbolt. This was an act of providential justice, similar to that which about a century and a half before had cut off the two Borgias.

With the Marchioness Brinvilliers, this votary of science had formed a *liaison*. The lady had a husband, it was true ; but he was one of those convenient French husbands, of whom we read so many, and he offered no serious obstacle to the amour. Not so M. D'Aubray, the father of the marchioness, who was so much

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out of the fashion of the age, as to feel annoyed that a daughter of his could form an illicit attachment. With the assistance of the chevalier the marchioness determined to remove him. She would not, however, trust too much to the first chance ; she would not stake all on a single cast : so she first poisoned her servant with some preserved gooseberries. The maid felt as if “ her heart were stuck with pins ;” but nevertheless she recovered ; and the marchioness consequently bespoke a stronger dose from her lover. It should be observed that the appearance of this lady was such as to disarm suspicion. We copy her portrait from Dumas. “ At the age of twenty-eight, she was in all the splendour of her beauty. The figure was small, but perfectly formed. The rounded face was charmingly delicate. Her features, so much the more regular that they were never altered by any internal affection, were as those of a statue, which, by some magic power, might have received life for a moment ; and the cold and cruel impassibility, which was but a mask to cover remorse, might easily have been taken for the reflected serenity of a pure soul.” In her design upon her father, this command of her features gave her an incalculable advantage. It was with the playfulness of an affectionate child that she petulantly insisted that none should wait on her beloved parent but herself ; it was with a smiling countenance that she handed him the poisoned broth ; it was with an agony of pretended grief that she perceived the paroxysms which herself had caused : but it was with the calmness of science, that she triumphantly watched the gradual victory of death over life. The crime did not produce the desired effect. The father died, blessing his murderess ; but he left two sons, who were equally nice in their notions of honour, and equally ready to check the marchioness in her career of vice. It was necessary to supply by a fresh crime what the first had left undone : the brothers were marked out for death, and soon perished, through the machinations of their sister and her paramour. The sudden death of the latter in his laboratory, the discoveries that were then made, and the

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confessions of his servants, who had been accomplices, revealed the whole mystery : and, indeed, the frequent occurrence of singular deaths had already begun to attract the notice of the people. The marchioness, when taken by the officers of justice, used the same art in attempting to destroy herself, which she had formerly employed in destroying others. First she endeavoured to swallow a pin but an " archer " perceived her design and forced her to eject it. Next, when she was left to take her meal without knife or fork, she attempted to effect suicide by biting a piece out of her drinking-glass, though with no better success. Once in prison, she became a perfect devotee, and the conversations between her and the priest that attended her are worked up by Dumas with much quiet pathos. When condemned to death, she had to undergo the *question ordinaire* and *extraordinaire*: miserable tortures given for the purpose of extorting confession, and more disgraceful to the age in which they were inflicted than to the criminal that endured them. The wretched woman, when her own guilt was known, had nothing further to confess ; and therefore had to endure, for no purpose, the whole course of pain which the law prescribed, and which was executed with barbarous exactness. The sentence was, that she should be carried in a tumbril to the *Place de Grève* with bare feet, and a cord about her neck, making full declaration of her guilt, and holding in her hands a burning torch weighing two pounds. She was then to be beheaded, her body was to be burned, and the ashes were to be scattered to the wind. It was with the meekness of the most complete resignation, that the marchioness endured the degradations required by this sentence : that is, during the chief part of her progress : for when she first beheld the crowd that had come to witness her exposure, the native disposition, which she had so often concealed, broke forth in all its fury ; and the painter Lebrun, who was a spectator of the scene, lost no time in catching the expression which is still preserved in the Louvre. But the meekness returned and the populace admired, and Madame de Sevigné records,

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that the day after the execution her bones were sought for, as it was thought she was a saint !

The *roués* of the time of Louis XIV. of whom the Marquis Sante Croix is a specimen, formed a kind of link between the polished profligate of modern times, and the vindictive noble of the middle ages. The murderers of this stamp were gay men of the world, with a thousand affairs of gallantry on their hands, but with designs worthy alone of a captain of banditti. Such a man was the Marquis de St. Maximent, who having formed a *liaison* with the presumptive heiress to the estate of the Count of Saint-Geran, broke every tie of gratitude, and though the count had protected him from the pursuit of justice, watched the birth of his child, that he might make away with it, and thus preserve the pretensions of his mistress. This man is the hero of one of the *Crimes Célèbres* but the Abbé de Ganges is a more terrible specimen of the time, and the events connected with him, events which at the time spread a gloom over the court of the "Grand Monarque," are far more interesting.

The Marchioness de Ganges was a prodigy of her time, a prodigy of beauty and of virtue : and though the latter qualification, in that profligate age, drew upon her more contempt than admiration, yet was the contempt invariably dissipated in her presence, such influence had her charms on all that beheld her. The pamphlet published at Rouen in 1667, which gave the particulars of her murder, and furnished M. Dumas with the materials for his narrative, describes her person as follows :

"The complexion, which was a dazzling white, was adorned by the red tint, which was not in the least too vivid, and which, by a *nuance* that art could not have more dexterously produced, blended with the whiteness of her complexion. This brilliancy of her face was set off by the decided blackness of her hair, which was arranged about a well-proportioned forehead, as if a painter of the most exquisite taste had designed it. The eyes, which were large and full, were of the colour of her hair, and the soft yet piercing fire with which they shone prevented any one from regarding her fixedly. The shape, the turn,

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the smallness of her mouth, and the beauty of her teeth, were beyond comparison. The position and the regular proportion of her nose gave to her beauty an air of dignity which inspired as much respect for her, as her beauty could inspire love. The roundness of her face, produced by an *embonpoint bien ménagé*, presented all the vigour and freshness of health. To complete her charm, the Graces seemed to direct her looks, the movement of her lips, and of her head; her figure corresponded to the beauty of her face; indeed her arms, her hands, her carriage, and her deportment, left nothing to desire if we would have the most agreeable image of a beautiful person."

Such was Marie de Rossan, who at the age of thirteen married the Marquis de Castellane, and who at the age of twenty-two, on the death of her first husband, married the Marquis de Ganges: thus forming a union with which all her misfortunes commenced. At first they were much attached, and their life passed happily enough; but the marquis, who had formerly led rather a loose life, now fell back into the society of his old friends, while he had just feeling enough to be jealous at the conquests which the beauty of his wife, with perfect innocence on her part, continually made. A mutual coolness arose, but the unhappiness of the lady was not at its height, till her husband had invited his two brothers to stay at his house, the Abbé and the Chevalier de Ganges. The first was a profligate *bel esprit*, who merely assumed the ecclesiastical name for fashion's sake, without belonging to the Church; the second was naturally a mere log, yet perfectly capable of being warmed up into a malicious brute under the genial influence of the abbé. Both these notable gentlemen fell in love with their brother's lovely wife, and both endeavoured to seduce her; when finding themselves repelled by her virtue, they both decided that she should be an object for their malice, and the removal of the whole family from Avignon, which had been their residence, to Ganges, a small town distant nine leagues, where the family *château* of the marquis was situated, seemed to favour their designs. A presage of ill accompanied the

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marchioness in her journey to this lonely place. Dumas, who as we have said invariably opens his narrative with a dramatic scene, describes an interview of the marchioness with a sorceress of the period, who predicts that she will die young and by violent means ; and this prediction, uttered a year before her marriage with the marquis, is made the foundation of a superstitious feeling which constantly weighs upon her, and gives a character of fatality to the tale. So impressed was she with the belief that she would never return from Ganges, that before she left Avignon she made a will declaring her mother her sole legatee, with a power of appointment in favour of either of her two children. Even this precaution did not satisfy her ; for expecting that some new disposition would be wrung from her, she assembled the magistrates of Avignon, and solemnly declared to them that this was her only genuine will, and that any subsequent one she might sign, would only be extorted from her by violence. The gloomy presentiments now gave way to more substantial fears ; for when she had reached Ganges her husband returned to Avignon on the plea of pressing business, and she was left alone with the hateful brothers, who had already made attempts upon her honour. The connexion which the marquis had with the dreadful event that followed ; whether he was really a participator in the villainy of his brothers, or whether by his absence he undesignedly assisted them ; seems a matter of doubt. Certain it is, that the first policy of the brothers was to induce their sister-in-law to make a new will in favour of her husband, to which she consented partly out of fear, and partly because she was aware that the appeal she had made to the magistrates of Avignon—an appeal which had remained perfectly unknown to the De Ganges family—would render the subsequent testament of no effect. She therefore signed the new will.

It was in the month of May, 1667, a few days after the execution of the second will, that the marchioness, feeling somewhat ill, was confined to her chamber, whither she invited

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the two brothers and some ladies of the neighbourhood to partake of a collation. After all this company had retired, and the chevalier was left alone with the marchioness, the abbé, who had conducted the ladies from the apartment, returned, and presenting to her a pistol and a glass, while the chevalier drew his sword, offered her the choice of three deaths. The poor marchioness, after in vain endeavouring to soften the execrable miscreants, at last chose the poison. She swallowed the liquor, a portion of which falling on her bosom, burned it like fire, and she dropped the glass. But the abbé would not allow a chance of escape. He discovered that much of the poison was precipitated to the bottom of the glass, and this he collected on the point of a silver bodkin, and presented it to the marchioness. She had, however, sufficient presence of mind to retain it in her mouth without swallowing it, and contrived to get rid of it unperceived. She asked for her confessor, and the ruffians left her; and with a courage which never seems to have forsaken her, she determined on escaping. She looked at the window, but saw that it afforded no hope: when the sudden appearance in her room of the chaplain, who was an accomplice of the brothers, gave her desperate energy. She sprang from the window, while the chaplain seized her garments to detain her. This act on the part of the enemy really preserved her life, for while she would otherwise had fallen on her head from a height of two and twenty feet, the grasp which tore her clothes, broke the violence of the descent, and she reached the ground in safety. The wretch dashed a water-jug after her, in the hope of destroying her, but it shivered at her feet.

She had thus escaped from her apartment, and with some difficulty she escaped from the court into which she had descended: but she found the brothers in pursuit of her, and she darted along exclaiming that she was poisoned, while her persecutors shouted that she was mad. The chevalier overtook the marchioness, and they entered the nearest house, struggling as they entered, and found there the wife of the owner, with a

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number of female friends. These had been acquaintances of the marchioness, and while she was protesting that she was poisoned, and her brother-in-law still affirmed her madness, one of the ladies slipped an antidote into her hand, part of which she swallowed, while another gave her a glass of water. As soon as she attempted to taste this, the savage chevalier, in the presence of the company, broke the glass between her teeth, *so that the pieces cut her lips*. The women exasperated, flew at the miscreant, but the marchioness entreated that she might be left with him alone. The wish was obeyed, and she attempted to soften the assassin, but he only took advantage of her situation, by stabbing her repeatedly with his rapier, which he used as a dagger. Believing that she was dead he rejoined his brother, who, armed with a pistol, was waiting at the threshold. The women had rushed to her assistance, attracted by her cries, and found her senseless, with a piece of the rapier, which had been broken, sticking in her shoulder. They called for help, and the brothers, who still were near the house, believing that the marchioness was not dead after all, re-entered, and the abbé attempted to shoot her, when he was prevented by the same lady who had given her the antidote, and who raising his hand, made him discharge the contents of his pistol into the ceiling. He stunned this new enemy with a blow from the butt end of the weapon, but the ladies at last contrived to thrust the two wretches from the house and closed the door behind them. The marchioness never recovered. On her dying bed she saw her husband, who returned apparently in an agony of grief—which it is difficult to believe sincere—and she took the sacrament from the hands of the vile priest who had been the accomplice of her brothers, and whom she from a principle of charity would not betray. When she was dead, the physicians declared that it was the poison that had killed her, for none of the wounds inflicted by the sword were mortal. The draught she had taken would, according to the *procès verbal*, have killed a lion in a few hours, but she lingered for

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more than a fortnight. The account from which M. Dumas has chiefly taken his narrative, prettily says, "Nature lovingly defended the beautiful body she had taken such pains to form."

The fate of the marchioness, so celebrated as a beauty, was not a matter to be thought lightly of at the court of Louis XIV. There, when Marchioness de Castillane, had she danced twice in one evening with the king himself; there had Christina of Sweden declared, that of all she had seen, nothing was equal to the *belle Provençale*, the name which thenceforth attached to this amiable and unfortunate woman. The poets of the time set their wits to work, and M. Dumas has for the edification of the world selected two sonnets written to *bouts rimés*, which he modestly declares are the "least bad" of any he has been able to find. The murderers did not meet with the judicial fate they deserved: the two brothers, though condemned to be broken alive on the wheel, had escaped beyond the reach of the law; while the marquis was banished from the kingdom, his property was confiscated, and he was deprived of his nobility. This last sentence will either appear too harsh or too lenient accordingly as we regard the participation of the marquis in the affair. That such a sentence could have been perfectly just seems impossible.

The history of the Marchioness de Ganges is generally known in France; but the supplementary history, namely, that of the persons connected with the murder, and also that of the lady's children, M. Dumas takes some pride in having collected. The chevalier, it seems, mixing in the troops of Venice against the Turks, was killed by a bomb-shell, which exploded for his especial benefit, as it destroyed him and did not injure those near him. The abbé passed a most unhappy life abroad, and died a pious protestant at Amsterdam. The Marquis de Ganges sneaked back again to his château, taking advantage of the persecution of the reformed religion that was going on, and enjoying the favour of the Catholics of the place from his zeal in the cause of their faith. There he might have remained in

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safety, but he endeavoured to seduce the wife of his own son, who immediately requested the king again to banish his father. This revealed the return of De Ganges, which had been hitherto unknown to Louis, and he would have been prosecuted with the greatest rigour, had he not fled, and escaped not only the vengeance of the king, but after a while even the penetrating search of—M. Dumas. The daughter of the Marchioness de Ganges was also the heroine of a little romance, which we forbear to repeat, and contributed her mite towards confirming the belief that a fatality hung over the family.

These are the "*Crimes Célèbres*," arising from the ferocity, unchecked by law, of one period, and the corroding profligacy of another. But the crime of bigotry and priestly intolerance; the fall of innocence, amid the yells of ignorance and petty spite, while the secret policy of a superior though unprincipled mind was working in the background, was committed in the execution of Urbain Grandier, the pious and enlightened curate of Loudun, in the reign of Louis XIII. The murderers here were merely judicial murderers: the crime of which the intended victim was accused was not only an absurdity in itself, but was known to be an absurdity by all the intelligent people of the place. Urbain having offended some of his influential neighbours, and being unfortunately of too proud a nature to seek to mollify them, it was resolved he should die somehow or other; and no better expedient could be hit on than to fasten upon him the crime of witchcraft. A convent-full of Ursuline nuns were converted into demoniacs for the express purpose of burning poor Urbain for the crime of possessing them. The imposition was not well managed; it was a bungle from beginning to end; it was completely evident that the ignorant nuns had been trained for the occasion by the enemies of Urbain: and to the questions put by unprejudiced investigators, the demons that answered by their lips indulged in such miserable Latinity, that roars of laughter instead of thrills of horror were the

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invariable result of the interrogation. In defiance of the doctrine then entertained that demons were masters of all languages. these audacious fiends substituted ablatives for accusatives, and accusatives for ablatives ; if they could not exert their malice in any other form, they at least demolished Priscian's head with inconceivable ferocity ; in short, if they were demons at all, they were the demons of the old play " *Bellum Grammaticale* " —Solecismus, Barbarismus, and Cacotonus. The miserable device was failing as fast as it could, but the persecutors drew Richelieu into their cause, and then Urbain's fate was certain. A commission was sent down, not to try but to find guilty ; and the Ciceronians who had formerly laughed so loudly now ceased their mirth, and heard the *verbum transitivum* govern a nominative case with demure countenances, as they clearly saw that a smile might bring them into the same predicament as the culprit. Urbain, who had committed a more substantial offence than that with which he was principally charged, by writing a book against the celibacy of the clergy, was cruelly tortured, and finally burned alive : giving Richelieu one more of those stains of blood, which, as De Vigny says in his admirable novel of *Cinq Mars*, the red of his costume served so well to conceal.

The narratives of the Cenci and of Karl Ludwig Sand we pass over as being already familiar to our readers : and with more regret the powerfully melodramatic tale of Vaninka, because it has lately been presented in an English form. But before we take leave of a book, which we have read with great interest—we can scarcely say pleasure—we cannot help remarking on one fault of M. Dumas : a fault which he has in common with many of his brother writers of modern France, and which is a kind of reaction against the old delicacy, when a murder on the Parisian stage would have thrown an audience into convulsions. It runs riot through all his performances : and even in the clever book we have been noticing, there is hardly an effort to subdue it. He is constantly anxious to produce an

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effect ; and often the talent which he displays in concentrating to this end the means that history affords him, is beyond praise ; but he too frequently attempts to excite a powerful sensation by physical horror only, forgetting that it is one thing to touch the imagination of his readers, and another to attack the stomach. We are quite willing to learn that the different unfortunate people who figure in his book were tortured in various ways ; but surely he need not tell us how every joint of Beatrice Cenci, of Madame Brinvilliers, of Urbain Grandier cracked after its own peculiar fashion : surely we need not be initiated into all the horrid details of the *question ordinaire* and the *question extraordinaire*, and the *question du feu*, and the *question de la veille*, and the *question de la corde*. Having united the character of the artist with that of the historian, to give his narrative a more attractive form, M. Dumas might have softened the dry records of the chronicler, when they happened to be disgusting. But, on the contrary, he has used his art to heighten the horrors which history has given him : dwelling with peculiar satisfaction on the limb that starts upon the rack, on the flesh that quivers in the pincers. In the same spirit we regret that he should needlessly have dwelled on the indecencies of history. There was no necessity to transcribe the beastly orgies of the Borgia family, especially when he assumed that he should have *lectrices*—lady-readers. Those who will only know the “Crimes Célèbres” through the medium of this article—terrible as the crimes are in themselves—will have no notion of the sediment of filth and horror that has been cast aside.

And these blemishes are the more to be regretted because the few disgusting pages will limit the circle of the readers of a book, which from the research to which it owes its origin, and the power with which it is written, well deserves to be generally known. For it is not a mere history of cut-throats and house-breakers ; of the common criminals of their day, who were the mere excrescences of society ; but of personages who forcibly reflect their period, and are connected with its leading features.

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The same praise that was given by Hegel to Göthe for connecting his idyll of "Hermann and Dorothea" with the great events of the French revolution, is due to M. Dumas, who has invariably shown the link that binds his "criminals" to the fortunes of Europe. And as these "criminals" thus represent various phases of society, surely a wholesome moral may be drawn from his book—or rather from those events which his book brings before us—namely, that at the present time, when an Abbé de Ganges and a Chevalier Sainte Croix could scarcely exist, when the crimes of a Borgia and the execution of a Grandier would be utterly impossible, it would be vain to say that human nature has not progressed, and that, however bigotry and prejudice may point to bygone periods, it is not a real blessing to be born in the nineteenth century.

LETTERS FROM PARIS.

By CHARLES GUTZKOW.

WE must have made some mistake in our old estimation of the Germans, finding them as we do so much the reverse of all previous conception. The two qualities which we should have least thought of attributing to them, are certainly vivacity and impertinence. Yet never did we see these developed to a greater degree than in the writings of recent German travellers, critics, and controversial writers. Prince Puckler Muskau was a personification of both. But the prince, we learned, was doubly an exception: first, as a prince and a scapegrace; secondly, as a Prussian. For the air of the Spree was said to generate a certain self-conceit, unknown and foreign to the rest of the Germans. Nevertheless we find both developed to a very satisfactory pitch amongst the honest burghers of Hamburg, and in the clime of fat and cloudy Holstein. Of Heine it might be said, that the air of Paris had given sharpness to his wit, and half Frenchified the German. But here is another Hamburger, Gutzkow, a German all over, as utterly uninoculated with the ideas as with the language of France, and yet he is as lively as a Frenchman of the last century, petulant as a child, and impertinent as Paul Pry: that is, if Paul Pry were to publish memoirs and tours. Herr Gutzkow enters every celebrated house in the French metropolis, at least those owned by men eminent in either politics or literature. And he sets forth to the public the entire conversation, manner, personal appearance, and habits, of every one of his receivers or his hosts. However reprehensible this, we are yet perhaps

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wrong to style it as an impertinence in Gutzkow, who with all his wit is as simple as a child, and tells all he saw and heard as innocently and naturally, as if it was a thing of course. And so perhaps it was. Parisian eminencies are very apt to *poser*, or give sittings to, curious strangers, in order to allow the daguerreotypist or the moral portrait-painter to carry off what he can, and make the most of it. Gutzkow seems to have felt this. For he avows that amidst all the persons he saw and talked with, he penetrated but to one family circle during his residence in Paris.

It is not, however, a six weeks' tourist, no matter what his sagacity or his country, who can give fitting portraiture of the men holding first rank in France. It is necessary to have seen them in past and in present, and to have observed them in the very different positions into which the fortune of a few years has flung them.

In order to depict M. Guizot, for example, we must have seen, twenty, nay thirty years ago, the ardent young constitutionalist, full of that protestant hatred for Napoleon's *régime*, so universally felt in his native town of Nismes; a feeling which nearly caused Napoleon himself to be stoned at Orogon on his journey to Elba. Ten years later, the same person should have remarked Guizot in the historical professor's chair of the Sorbonne, attended not by a numerous but by a most attached band of hearers, to whom he expounded the mysteries of English history. We recollect him well. It was not yet the period of the historic mania, when Guizot grew more popular. At that time, in 1822, Cousin's vague philosophy and Villain's shallow criticism drew crowds to their lectures, muddy-thoughted as were the one, empty-thoughted the other, whilst the really solid and useful information offered by Guizot was comparatively neglected. But the man was not to be put down, either as man of letters or statesman. He and his wife set to work, each writing a score of books in a twelvemonth: and thus he kept his name fixed before the public eye for years.

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Perseverance, and an imperturbable determination to occupy first place, have been and are the first characteristics of M. Guizot: a desire not compounded of a wish for wealth or luxury, or the adjuncts of eminence; but a love of eminence for itself, for its activity, for its satisfying the cravings of a spirit, purely and naturally ambitious.

Our first glance at Guizot was when in his home at Nismes, under a mother's brow: a mother, too, who had lost her husband on a revolutionary scaffold. That must have been a grave, a solemn, a religious home; whose gayest pastime was severe study; whose every feeling partook somewhat of the depth of devotion.

About a day's journey from Nismes, in the same region of ardent and eloquent spirits, a youth ten years younger than Guizot was at school. Even at that time the strongest antagonism, though unknown one to the other, existed between the feelings of both. Young Guizot's ideas were those of protestant and constitutional liberalism, such as the *Feuillans* had preached and fallen with in the great revolution. Thiers was bred in quite another school. Like the majority of his college, he was liberal in a revolutionary and Napoleonite sense; that is, more urgent on the transformation of France from monarchism and aristocracy to pure democracy, than caring either how this was to be effected, or what was to be the result. Each rose with the tide that suited him: Guizot with that of 1814 and 1815, Thiers with the swell which preceded and produced 1830. Guizot, a young universitarian, was placed by the Abbé de Montesqueiu in the office of the French *Chancellerie*, or Ministry of Justice, in which he must have seen and done dirty work, such as the preparation of categories of exile and proscription, and edicts of censorship. Yet a liberal might have thought these necessary, against the scum of imperialists and jacobins united. Whatever M. Guizot thought, however, his employers intended the despotic reaction not merely against ultra-liberals, but against the whole class even of

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constitutionalists. When Guizot saw this, he withdrew from politics—indeed his protestantism became itself a bar to his advancement—and took refuge in his professorial chair. By this he raised himself to an eminence more certain and less dangerous than that which the Chamber of Deputies bestowed in those days. The ecclesiastical minister of public instruction now stopped his lectures; on which Guizot joined the writing of political pamphlets to the graver task of historic editing. Attached to the party of the Doctrinaires, to that of Royer Collard and Camille Jordan, Guizot rose with his party, and with it was on the point of coming into power and place under M. de Martignac, when Charles the Tenth madly flung himself, in horror of a moderate ministry, into the arms of Polignac, and with Polignac into exile. The day after the revolution Guizot was minister.

What a cabinet was that! It was composed of thirteen or fourteen persons, not one of whom had ever acted with the other, and all most opposed in habits, temper, and political ideas. Imagine Count Molé and M. Laffitte, Dupont de l'Eure and the Duc de Broglie, sitting together in council! Laffitte and Dupont talked as if they were in a conciliabule of opposition, and the Duc de Broglie politely told them, that they had no idea of how a government was to be carried on. All were in a panic, Louis Philippe himself included. But each had his own object of terror, and each set about combating his phantom, caring little for his neighbours. Louis Philippe and M. Guizot agreed in dreading the potentates and powers of Europe, from whom they expected an immediate onslaught; but each prepared for resistance in his own way. Louis Philippe took an honest and respected legitimist, the Duc de Mortemart; bamboozled him by saying, that he would merely keep the throne warm for the Duke of Bourdeaux; and sent him to deliver this message to the Czar of Russia in order to keep him quiet. This tremendous lie had its effect; but neither the Duc de Mortemart, nor the Czar of Russia, ever forgave Louis

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Philippe. M. Guizot, on his part, thought the best mode of resistance was to excite revolution. He gathered together the emigrant Spaniards, gave them money, directions, and ordered Mina into Spain. Similar manœuvres were put in practice on the side of Belgium. M. Guizot during this was minister of public instruction: Count Molé was the foreign minister. But when Molé saw that the king, and M. Guizot, and M. de Talleyrand, and ten others, were more foreign minister than himself, he resigned.

Had Gutzkow visited Paris then, in 1830, he would have seen her heroes in new lights: not standing in composed or graceful attitudes for his portraiture, but making, most of them, very uncouth struggles for political pre-eminence. Gutzkow might at that time, on any evening of the week, have presented himself in the antechamber of the Palais Royal or the Tuileries, had himself announced, and have joined the royal and ministerial circle (in which all Paris joined) without difficulty or impediment. M. Guizot he might have found at the office of public instruction, then in the Rue des Saints Pères, in close confabulation with conspirators, such as Mina and Toreno, and as anxious to revolutionize his neighbours, as he is now to pacify them. Then was the Duchess of Broglie's the great rendezvous of the Doctrinaires. The Duke himself, small, orderly, and amiable gentleman as he was, was still excited by the revolutionary movement. And no one will ever forget the memorable scene, which occurred some months later, in which the little duke, obstinate and choleric, fairly bullied Louis Philippe into a recognition of Isabella of Spain, and packed off Mignet to Madrid with it, as soon as he had wrung it from the king. Cousin, Remusat, Count St. Aulaire, and all the Globists, were the great men of the Duc de Broglie's circle: Cousin, an excellent talker, and one who, extravagant all his life, chose at that moment to be original, by preserving calmness and common sense when everyone else was getting rid of them. But this was the Aristocracy of the revolution.

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Thiers belonged to quite another group. For many years the little man had been, as is said, "pulling his Satanic Majesty by the tail," and clinging to such poor creatures as Etienne and Felix Bodin for employment and patronage. His History, however, and some financial pamphlets written for Laffitte, had raised his head above water. And some folks, jealous of the exclusive pedantry of the Doctrinaires, enabled Thiers, with Mignet and Carrel, to set up the *National*. Here was another scene wherein Thiers ought to have been visited. Fussy, breathless, despotic, no one could have had to do with a more uncomfortable editor than Thiers. As to Mignet, he made no resistance, took the articles to do that were given him, and was more devoted to keeping his hair in curl-papers, than to becoming First Consul. Carrel alone bullied Thiers from time to time. And yet three abler men, nor more united, never perhaps presided over the editing of a great political organ. During the revolution the *Globe* expired: the boat of the Doctrinaires could not live in such a sea. The *National* lived on and mainly aided the carrying through of the revolution. Thiers became Under Secretary of State.

There was at that time a man in much greater estimation than either Guizot or Thiers, although, like Thiers, he had not yet reached the Chamber of Deputies. This was Odillon Barrot. If Thiers and Guizot are men of the south, small in stature and in form, bright of eye, mercurial and quick, Odillon Barrot is a true son of the north, fair, full, and florid, with an eye that might as well be out of the head as in it, for all the expression it gives. His character suited his physique, being slow, pompous, inflated, soft, and wavering, but honest of purpose, and frank in expression. Barrot's face does not belie the O that begins his name. It is a potato face, with far more of the Irishman than the Frenchman. But it is the Irishman tamed down to the Frenchman, with but a small portion of that mingled impudence and humour, which form the Irish character. M. Barrot had another Irish quality, that of getting up a row, as

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July testified. Unfortunately, after the row had become a revolution, he became Prefect of the Seine, and he was quite unskilled in putting down or calming a row. When Barrot was Prefect, the Archbishop's palace was plundered, and St. Germain l'Auxerrois, the parish church of the Louvre, gutted by the mob. The new King of the French thought this to be too *débonnaire* on the part of a Prefect, and he dismissed Monsieur Barrot. Thus Barrot had put himself, or allowed himself to be put, the day after the revolution, in a post where he came in contact with a mob, and in which he was at once called upon to tolerate or to repress its violence : a dangerous alternative. Thiers laughed at Barrot's simplicity, and declaring that he would have nothing to do with politics for the present, ensconced himself in the figures and accounts of the Under Secretaryship of Finance.

A better contrast to Barrot than either Thiers or Guizot, is M. Berryer, an atrabilious, black-muzzled personage, with a sinister likeness to Mr. John Wilson Croker ; but a gay, jovial, round-stomached fellow, with a pate as bald as Barrot. We can fancy to ourselves both of them singing in a monastic choir, with good bass voices, both doing honour to the vocal and physical powers of the fraternity. But Barrot's voice is like the sound emitted by the wooden horn of the mountain cantons, whilst Berryer's has the sharpness and force of the bugle. Berryer is considered the most powerful actor, but there is no sincerity in his tone as there is in Barrot's. Even Berryer's warmth is factitious ; it is that of the lawyer or the trading politician. Whereas Barrot's, though full of pretension, is honest, and if his eloquence does not proceed from the heart, it has at least a great deal to do with the conscience.

We are not old enough to recollect Fox, but Barrot, of all the French Chamber, ought most to resemble him. There is no one to liken to Pitt, academic and argumentative. For Guizot's eloquence holds the medium of that spoken from the protestant pulpit and the professor's chair, full of solemnity and of emphasis, but those of the preacher, not the statesman.

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One always expects to hear from say, *Mes frères*. Where Guizot is happiest, is in reply. For when he commences and pours forth a premeditated speech, he is too doctrinal, too mystic, too remote from the reality of things. Whereas, in reply, he is forced to be personal, pointed, logical ; whilst his appeal to his own good intentions from the exaggerated attacks of his enemies, is in general at once plausible and touching.

As to Thiers, his eloquence is unlike any thing that ever existed, or was ever imagined. Fancy a bronze statuette, gifted with the power of motion and the power of speech. If cracked, so much the better : the tingling sounds which it may be supposed to emit, will only be the truer. His features are as unmoved, as much bronze as those of the statuette. Dantan could make a Thiers in three hours—if anyone else would but find the organs, the senses, and the intellect. The first time this statuette gets up to speak, or to squeak, there is a universal desire to put him down with a universal laugh. But the little Punch is not to be put down. He fixes his spectacles (his eyes not being visible) upon his audience. He addresses them in a *how d'ye do* vein of eloquence, and soon captivates their attention just as if he had taken each person present by the button-hole. There is no warmth, no apostrophe, no rhetoric, no figure of speech, no bathos, no pathos, but a wonderful tumbling forth of ideas, as if they came from a *cornucopia*, and that without any effort, any aim at originality, any desire to excite surprise. It is sensible and cold eloquence of most unassuming and irresistible superiority. In his own home, and from one of his own armchairs, it is the same, except that he blends the genuine French *esprit* with his natural quiet oratory. In a word, Thiers is the most wonderful man in Europe.

After Thiers, the most powerful speaker in the French Chamber is, in our opinion, Dupin. He effects by violence and energy what Thiers does by insinuation. Very coarse, with the voice, gesture, and aspect of a peasant, no one can *faire vibrer le fibre national*, like Dupin. He seldom speaks : never

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unless when provoked or excited. And he is never either provoked or excited except by the absurdities or extravagances of either extreme. When the priestly or the ultra-Tory party have gone too far in severity or illegality or unconstitutionality, and when the liberal opposition attack in vain on such a point, Dupin starts up to the aid of the latter, and gives court and minister so keen and ironical a castigation, that the tenants of the ministerial benches shrink into them. When, on the other hand, the Left fondles some remarkable absurdity, and cries at the top of its lungs against some trifle, which it represents as the very destruction of all freedom and of the French name, Dupin rises to chastise his liberal neighbours (for he sits near them), and to declare, that liberal as he thinks himself, he has no idea of going the length of such absurdity as that. As a social man, Dupin is delightful amongst his legal comrades of the bar, full of fun, and of good sense. He is sadly ignorant of the more solid elements of policy. Political economy is his horror; and capitalists, fond as he is himself of money, are objects of his avowed aversion.

Lamartine has forced himself into eminence as an orator; we say forced himself, for there was great reluctance to listen to a poet talking politics. Lamartine, however, had been a diplomatist before he became a poet, and his notions of foreign policy are far less crude than those of his colleagues in general. Lamartine has the honour of having foreseen and foretold the treaty of July and the breach with England, full eighteen months before they took place. In a memorable speech he pointed out the quarrel into which both countries were blindly flinging themselves, and vainly begged of his countrymen to stop. The speech was then laughed at as the most absurd of prophecies. He had afterwards the greater honour of standing almost alone in his opposition to the Fortification of Paris.

Mauguin is as good an orator as any man can be who wants common sense, and another common quality generally cited with it. Tocqueville has utterly failed both as a speaker and

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politician. Sauzet is whipped cream. Villemain is a remarkable and indeed the last surviving specimen, of the mode of thinking and speaking of the last century. His French is classic, his style epigrammatic, his tone ironical, and his arguments veiled Voltairianism. Cousin is an awkward schoolboy, who has purloined some eloquence and mysticism from German philosophers. But we have already come to the second-rate men, and may close the series of sketches into which we have digressed.

We return to the opinions of Gutzkow. What he says respecting Louis Philippe is too remarkable to be passed over in silence.

"No correct view has been taken of Louis Philippe," says Her Gutzkow. "He is depicted as a sincere and reserved personage, following up fixed aims with the utmost prudence and management. He is considered as half Louis the Eleventh, half Cromwell. The nice balance and varying fortunes of political parties is all considered the work of his political cleverness. There is not a word of truth in all this. Louis Philippe is the most talkative, unquiet, uncertain person in all France. The King of the French is good-natured, well-informed, sharp-sighted, but without any real power or firm will. The ever fermenting anxiety of his heart vents itself in words. To talk is his first necessity. France has been ruled by such ignorant monarchs, that it is its present honour to have for king a man of extensive knowledge, reading, and observation. Louis Philippe fascinates those presented to him: speaks English to English, German to German. No books, no names, no ideas, have escaped his observation. He reads all, even to scientific and statistical ones, and is better acquainted with the rising talent of the country than his minister. He can converse with every one on his own subject, and talks on without suffering rejoinder or interruption. Louis Philippe is not of the Talleyrand school, which considers speech as given to disguise thought. On the contrary, he thinks speech given in order to excite thought. He thinks aloud, and lives externally. He cannot bear to be alone, but seeks for applause and echo. Intellectual cultivation, good nature, and indiscretion are so mixed up in him, that one does not know which predominates. But far from being reserved, he is open; far from being silent, he is talkative; and far from being independent, he leans upon every one for support."

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In order to escape the charge of impertinence, this contradiction of every preconceived opinion ought to have been written by some intimate of his French Majesty, and not by a young foreign traveller, who spends a month in Paris, and never sets his foot at court. Gutzkow is, however, not all wrong. He has heard people talk, who evidently knew Louis Philippe well. But he has jumbled up and exaggerated their remarks and information into a mass of incongruities that no one could recognise as King of the French. That personage is indeed talkative, especially to those on whom he wants to impress any idea, and from whom he knows that he has none to get. But when Gutzkow says that he is a man of great observation, but cannot listen, he talks nonsense. There was a time when Louis Philippe was all ear, and no tongue, and that was when he was Duke of Orleans. He has little left to learn now in men or in things, except what his secret spies and correspondence tell him. And therefore he talks.

Gutzkow says that he is indiscreet, that he is not of the Talleyrand school, that he betrays his sentiments, and so forth. It is merely evident from this that Herr Gutzkow is an honest Hamburger, whose worldly sagacity, as Ruge says of him, must have been developed in the raw cotton of that trading city. Louis Philippe indiscreet! Louis Philippe betray his sentiments! God help the simple German! Another month spent in Paris would have convinced him that truth and indiscretion were qualities quite unknown in the political latitude which he pretends to describe.

But still Herr Gutzkow has his fraction of truth. Louis Philippe is talkative, and loves to dominate with the tongue. Moreover the king is unquiet. He is restless, always revolving some scheme. And the great complaint that his ministers have of him is, that he will not let well alone. But his activity seldom ascends to the higher region of politics: being generally the anxiety of a good father of a family to better his condition, increase his estate, and swell his purse. Heaven help the

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Intendant of his Civil List! none but a man so patient and devoted as he that now holds it, could stand the worry of that office. Appanage, *dotalions*, forests to cut or to buy, the marriage of his children—all family points make the king as active as if he had just made the family fortune in trade, and as if he had to found and regulate the future prospects and honours of the family for centuries. Such is the restlessness of the King of the French.

Another quality that Gutzkow attributes to him, is want of independence, and a leaning on others' opinions. This is altogether a mistake. One characteristic of his will suffice to prove it. And this is, that Louis Philippe never made friend or intimate of a man of talent. He detested Perier, he detests De Broglie, Thiers, Guizot, every one that could pretend to impose an opinion on him. His favourites are such men as Montalivet: men incapable of either having systems of their own, or of even divining the king's. No: Louis Philippe mentally never leaned upon any one. And he has had most able men as cabinet ministers, as ministers of foreign affairs, for years, who do not *yet* know what exactly were his aims or his wishes. So much for the indiscretion of his majesty, Louis Philippe.

It is difficult to say whether Gutzkow was more stricken with M. Thiers or George Sand. He called on the latter personage in the evening, at her lodgings in the Rue Pigale, and was received in a little room ten feet square, called the *Little Chapel*. The "nearer the church," says the proverb.

There was little or no light; Madame Sand and her daughter in that light; and two gentlemen altogether in the background and in silence, which they preserved. Madame Sand complained of being engaged in law, divers people menacing her with *contrainte par corps*, unless she wrote them a novel. They talked of the drama. Gutzkow said they had as much dramatic talent in Germany, but not such accomplished specialties. The German added, that he had been to a French tragedy once, but

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never should go again. George Sand admitted that French tragedy was antiquated, and all its present writers, except Scribe, commonplace.

"Here," says Gutzkow, "she left her work, lit a cigarette, in which there was more paper than tobacco, and more coquetterie than emancipation of the female sex. 'Who is my translator into German?' asked she. 'Fanny Tarnow,' I said. 'I suppose she leaves out the immoral passages?' said Madame Sand, with irony. I did not reply, but looked at her daughter, who held down her head. A pause ensued of a second, but there was a great deal in that second."

So much for George Sand and "Young Germany." We will now collect what he says of Thiers.

"It surprised me much to find that Thiers did not owe his rise either to fortune or to his own genius, but merely to his talent for speaking. The external physiognomy of the chamber evinces lightness and superficiality. I could not at first believe that this betokened true; but Thiers himself told me that the surest mode of ruling the chamber was to amuse it, and that what members dreaded most was *ennui*. This is the secret of Thiers's eloquence: he amuses. It is not the fiery power of eloquence, nor the genius of the statesman, that have thrust Thiers up into his palace of the Place St. Georges. It is his talent, which in France is ever more fortunate than genius. Thiers receives every evening. Mignet is always there. Madame Dosne and her daughter do the honours. Whether Thiers got from his historic studies the trick of imitating Napoleon or not, I do not know; but there is certainly a resemblance in figure and manner. Thiers's is a Corsican nature. The form of the head and chin are Napoleonite, as are the sharp eyes and thin grey hairs. Small of stature, Thiers must look up to every one he addresses, and so he likes to throw himself back in an armchair, and address those who gather round him. He has no ministerial solemnity, but remains natural and good-natured in manner."

The argument turned on languages. Gutzkow mentioned the unfitness of the German for either political eloquence or history. "It will become fit for both," said Thiers, "as soon as Germany has free political institutions. Machiavel and De Thou have both historical styles, and would have had in any language simply because they were statesmen." Gutzkow

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here instanced Justus Moeser, as a German who had a genuine historical style. "You have been but a short time in Germany," said Gutzkow to Thiers. "I only wanted to visit the celebrated battle-fields," was the reply.

"Ay, thought I, it is these thoughts that made you set Europe in commotion, and stir up the French to revenge 1815, and Moscow, and Leipsic, and Waterloo. And I added aloud to Thiers, 'What we Germans could not do for ourselves—what neither our princes nor our chambers could effect—that you have done for us. You have awakened the Germans to political unity.'"

Thiers replied to Gutzkow, that he respected the independence of the Germans. "Napoleon's wars were forced on him from within and from without. Neither of these necessities pressed now. All that France wanted was to be independent and influential, and neither Russia nor England were prepared to allow her the due quantum of both. There was the Turkish empire dying, and when it went, France must have her finger in the pie as well as Russia and England. If Prussia held to Russia in that crisis, and Austria to England, then France was their enemy, and would turn the world upside down." Upon this, Gutzkow says, he immediately assured M. Thiers,

"That the present movement of the Germans was more national than liberal. We want unity, and will have it. We want not to quarrel with England or with Russia, but we want to do without any alliance. Prussia and Austria must make good, what the thirty years' war and the seven years' war broke up. Prussia and Austria separated in Ratisbon, but must come together in Frankfort. Let them unite, and we want neither Russia nor England. And your Napoleons had better don the civic mantle than the military riding-coat. The French would then have neither need nor excuse to cry out, 'Let us set the world upside down.'"

Gutzkow, however, is much more at home with poets, critics, and dramatists, than with politicians. And he has sketched his French brethren of the pen with equal freedom: from George Sand in her chapel twelve feet square, to Jules Janin, in his splendid garret overlooking the Luxembourg, making love to his wife. The German has crayoned all. He is like

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the *Enfant Terrible* of the caricature: speaking out all he sees and knows and guesses, with infantine malice, and trundling his hoop against the shins of all his acquaintance. We are glad he did not visit England, for this representative of Young Germany has a monstrous love of sunshine and summer, of the gay, the pleasurable, and the social. Now in England an idle visitor does not find these easily; and a few weeks on the banks of the Thames is apt to send the solitary wanderer back with aversion and disgust to us insulars. Thus Henry Heine, the other day, went to enjoy sea-breezes and study English character at Boulogne. He found a gay, proud set of demi-fashionables, who had never heard of Henry Heine, who took him in consequence for a commonplace personage without livery servants and coach and pair, and treated him *de haut en bas*. Poor Henry Heine was so susceptible and so indignant at all this, that he has become a decided foe to England and her inhabitants! He is a writer for the *Augsburg Gazette*, and therein has just published the most violent diatribes against our grasping, haughty, mercantile, intolerant, and abominable spirit. In short, he joins the French cry of *Delenda est Carthago*, setting us down for Carthage. For these reasons we sincerely hope that Young Germany may stay away from us, till he acquires less susceptibility, with more years, sense, and discretion.

Gutzkow is very severe upon Rachel, but seems to have taken his opinions respecting her solely from Janin. He bitterly complains of her never laughing. No one is human or has a heart, says Gutzkow, who does not laugh or betray feeling by a smile. The tragedian might reply, that the parts of Corneille's and Racine's heroines are no laughing matter. But the German critic calls the French actress (in our opinion, a woman of decided genius), stiff, made of pale bronze, without feminine softness, passion, or *gemuth*. He goes further than Janin taught him, however. For he extends this syeeping censure to the French in general.

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He asks, how is it, that there are so few children in the streets of Paris? The population of French towns, he says, consists of full-grown persons, whereas in Germany half the population consists of children. The explanation of this does not improve the French in the German estimation: it being, that French, and especially Parisian women, universally pack off their children to nurse, and often to starve and perish. This is the habit, not merely of the higher, but of the middle and poorer classes. Gutzkow attributes it to want of heart: but the real cause is, that French women take as much part in the business of life, especially of retail trade, as men; and consequently have not time to devote exclusively to a mother's task.

But French character, habits, and eminent men in letters and politics, form an ample field, not to be comprised in a tour or a book, nor exhausted in an article. Herr Gutzkow has but sketched superficialities, and we have followed his bee-like flutter through the Parisian world: bee-like, indeed, for while he culled sweets, he has left stings. When we meet with a more profound or more conscientious tourist, we shall be glad ourselves to return more seriously to the subject.

Since this was written, we have received, to place by the side of the German Gutzkow, another description of Paris, by a combination of one of the liveliest pens and the best pencil in it.* And the best pencil has done its duty well. Lami's sketches are admirable: as they were no doubt intended, the chief attraction of the work. We cannot say as much of M. Janin's prose: written in the character of an American: though a greater contrast to Jonathan than Jules Janin could not well be found. We dare say that in its original French his descriptive work was lively and interesting, and well-written.

* "The American in Paris." By Jules Janin. Illustrated by Eugene Lami. London, 1843.

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But most certainly in its translation it is dull, commonplace, awkward, and altogether illegible. Nor do we blame the translator ; for Jules Janin's quips and cranks are completely untranslatable. And though certainly knowing Paris intimately, Janin knows no tongue or train of ideas at all capable of translation into sober English. Even his anecdotes are stale, his points flat, and the moral of his tale, if he has one, is sure to evaporate and disappear before it has been told. M. Janin had heard, no doubt, of English humour, and thought it necessary to write humorously for the British public. But the attempt is ludicrous, not humorous. Thus he begins by talking of that *rascal*, Sterne, and thinks the word most happily applied.

In order not to seem a Frenchman, Janin falls to abusing *café au lait* : maligning one of the best things in Paris, whilst he falls on his knees in adoration of some of the worst. After puffing the west hotels and the west *restaurants*, adulating every thing fine and courtly, M. Janin visits the Chamber of Deputies, and bursts into a panegyric of M. Berryer, not undeserved. He also dwells on Dupin, by no means ill depicting him.

The account of Louis Philippe is not uninteresting, as it gives plain facts and circumstances, however small. It dwells on his majesty's horror of tobacco and love of wax-lights. It might have dwelt on his love of English comforts, and on the quarrel between him and the old Bourbons on the subject of certain matters of domestic convenience. Neither Louis XVIII. nor Charles X. would admit any vulgar innovations of building into the royal palaces ; whilst Louis Philippe would inhabit no palace on the old system, refusing to enter the Tuileries till arranged with comforts and innovations. This is considered by the old court one of Louis Philippe's revolutionary crimes.

Where Jules Janin is most at home, however, is behind and before the scenes of a theatre. He is the sublime impertinent of dramatic criticism, and rules over the *coulisses* with a

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despotism that makes even poor Rachel tremble. The best portion of his book is his account of Scribe, the great comic writer. This we shall at once transfer to our page.

"Just before reaching the Porte St. Denis, is the Gymnase Dramatique; a delightful little theatre, which M. Scribe and the Duchess De Berri raised between them. In this small enclosure are performed comedies which represent the slightest accidents of every-day life. When M. Scribe, the greatest amuser of the age, commenced this undertaking, there seemed no scope for comedy anywhere. Molière, like a sovereign master, had taken possession of all the great characters; he had worked the whole of humanity for his own benefit; there was not a vice nor an absurdity which had not been submitted to the censure and the rod of this illustrious genius. After him others had arisen: Lachaussee, for example, who had made comedy weep; Beaumarchais, who had taken it on to political ground; Marivaux, the comic poet of the ruelles and the boudoirs: these passed—Comedy had become silent, like all the rest. Inventors were contented with imitating masters. The Emperor Napoleon did not encourage this method of speaking to the crowd, and of saying very often, by means of a representation, severe truths, which the audience alone discovers, and which escapes all the sagacity of the censors. Then came M. Scribe. He had all the wit and invention necessary for the new enterprise; he at once understood that he could not carry his comedy back into former times, and yet that he could not leave it among the people. He therefore chose an intermediate world, a neutral ground, the Chaussée d'Antin, and finance; for, after all, every body stands a chance of becoming as rich as M. Rothschild. The marquis of ancient date and the grocer of depised family may make their fortunes in twenty-four hours, so that each could say, while beholding this new dominion of comedy, 'I shall perhaps enter there some day!' Placed on this rich territory, of which he was the Christopher Columbus, M. Scribe gave himself up at his ease to this paradox, which has suited his purpose admirably. The simple secret of his success has consisted in taking exactly the opposite of the comedies written before him. There was a comedy of Voltaire's, called 'Nanine.' This Nanine, a girl of no birth, marries a great lord, and is happy. M. Scribe takes in hand the defence of the opposite opinion, and writes the 'Mariage de Raison,' to prove that the son of a general would be very foolish to marry the daughter of a soldier. In the 'Premières Amours,' M. Scribe ridicules all the fine, sweet sentiments of youth, with which so many pretty comedies have been composed. The *Demoiselle à marier* is never so charming, as when she has no thought of marriage. *Le plus beau*

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Jour de la Vie is full of torments and miseries. And it is always thus. When he has a comedy to write, this original man takes up the side of long-established truth. In case of need, he would undertake to defend, not the *Misanthrope*, which Fabre d'Eglantine has done before him, but even the *Tartuffe*. Thanks to this ingenious subversion of the action, the story, and the persons of his comedy, M. Scribe has discovered the art of making his audience attentive. And as, besides, he writes quite simply, without knowing how to write ; as his dialogues are full of ordinary genius ; as, with all his wit, he is not more witty than the rest of the world ; the most complete success has attended this happy man. He has at once attained that popularity which is least contested and least contestable in France ; he has been, at the same time, celebrated and rich. The Duchess de Berri adopted him as her poet, and the Gymnase, sustained by clever comedians, made expressly for this comedy, finished by replacing the Théâtre Français. The success of M. Scribe lasted as long as the Restoration. But the Revolution of July came : immediately the Théâtre de Madame was nothing more than the Gymnase Dramatique. The box in which the amiable princess so often appeared, that royal box into which it was a great honour to be admitted, was empty. Then M. Scribe, faithless as the bird whose nest is destroyed, fled elsewhere. The Théâtre Français, which he had so roughly opposed, eagerly opened its doors to the Caldéron of 1830. Then M. Scribe composed vaudevilles in five acts, and without couplets, which the Théâtre Français calls comedies. At the same time the Opéra and the Opéra Comique secured the illustrious inventor : Meyerbeer and Auber would have no poetry but his : to the former he gave 'Robert le Diable,' to the latter the 'Domino Noir.' As for the Gymnase, when it found itself left to its own strength, it dispensed most easily with its poet. The spirit of the masters had remained everywhere, within the walls, and on the outside of the walls. Bouffé, that excellent comedian, who had never been in the school of Scribe, set himself seriously to work, to play comedies which were almost serious. Thus every one went on : the Gymnase without M. Scribe,—M. Scribe without the Gymnase : only, as it is not right that every thing should succeed with ungrateful men, M. Scribe was obliged to enter the French Academy, where he pronounced a discourse in M. de Bouffon's style. Thus was her Royal Highness the Duchess de Berri avenged ! Assuredly M. Scribe would not be in the Academy, if his first protectress was not at Goritz."

And here we have done with Jules Janin. It is all very well to employ foreign writers to draw up histories of their own country, to sketch the state of politics, of letters, of the arts,

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But merely to give a view of the exterior appearance and sights of Paris, or any foreign capital, with sketches of its society,—for this any English writer would have been much preferable. For not only has M. Janin been unable to discern round his own home what is commonplace and what is not; but he has written in a current and capricious style which defies translation, and which, however good in French, is downright trash in English. And a letterpress thus disgraces, instead of explaining or illustrating, the very beautiful prints which accompany it. We have never seen a happier specimen than in this book, of French design expressed by the English graver.

GEORGE HERWEGH'S POEMS.

GEORGE HERWEGH comes of humble parents in Wurtemberg, and received his first education at one of the state schools, in Stuttgart, where Strauss, Idewald, and others, got their first rudiments of learning. Subsequently, he studied at Tubingen, and on the conclusion of his University course was thrown upon his own resources for subsistence. He became sub-editor of a literary journal of no great mark—the *Europe*—of which A. Lewald is director, and further occupied himself with translating the poems of Lamartine, which he rendered in the author's metre. These translations are said to have merit.

In the midst of these avocations he was called upon to serve his time in the army; and it is evident that his literary labours could not have been very profitable to him, for he had not wherewithal to purchase a substitute, and his parents were too poor to buy his exemption. He was, moreover, too proud, or too timid, to address himself to his friends; and the consequence was, that the poet was seized upon, one unlucky morning, by a squad of police, and carried off—not to prison—but to the regimental barracks, where he was bidden to share a bed with a brother recruit: some big countryman, fresh from the Schwarzwald.

The young republican wrote off, in the bitterness of his heart, to his friend Lewald, assuring the latter that he would infallibly hang himself, unless he was released from prison within the four-and-twenty hours. On this, the editor of the *Europe* put all his wits to work in behalf of the imprisoned bard; and, in the first place, got a physician's certificate, by which Herwegh was respited from the barrack to the hospital; and, finally, was lucky enough to procure from the war minister an unlimited

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leave of absence for this gifted and refractory recruit, who was thus enabled to return to the peaceful exercise of the pen.

Some short time afterwards, as ill-luck would have it, Herwegh was at a public ball, where he quarrelled with an officer present, and a challenge was the consequence of their dispute. But the officer, as it happened, was a lieutenant in that very regiment of which George Herwegh was a private on leave of absence: his leave was immediately withdrawn, and he was ordered to join his regiment the very next day.

But one night, and half a bed with the big Schwartzwalder, had been enough for the poet, and he preferred to sleep in some free republican solitude, rather than in that odious company and barrack. The Swiss frontier is not more than four-and-twenty hours distance from Stuttgart; so the young man quitted the fines patriæ and dulcia arva of Wurtemberg, and was in Switzerland on the very day when they were looking out for him at his regiment. No doubt the lieutenant was much disappointed, and that Herwegh's name still figures on the regimental lists, with a "D" before it.

He got work upon a journal, called the *Volkshalle*, published by Dr. Wirth, at Belveue, near Constance, but soon quitted that paper, and established himself at Zurich, where he devoted himself exclusively to poetical composition, and where the first edition of his *Gedichte eines Lebendigen* was published.

The book met with the most extraordinary success: two editions were sold in the course of the first year, and his publisher then made him editor of a newspaper, published by the former with indifferent success up to that period, and called the *Deutsche Bothe in der Schweiz* (The German Messenger in Switzerland). Herwegh, accepting this post, determined to go into Germany, to seek for contributors and subscribers.

Then commenced for the young poet such a series of triumphs and successess, as never young poet enjoyed before. Toasts, meetings, balls, banquets, saluted him everywhere; and in Berlin, especially, the applause with which he was greeted

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was unbounded. All Berlin was *four* about him, as it had been of Liszt three months before, and of Börne and Madlle. Sontag a dozen years ago. Nor were the triumphs of George Herwegh altogether so unsubstantial as those of some other literary lions have been: for, our informant states, a young, rich, and handsome Berlinerinn became desperately enamoured of the republican bard, and is now a rich, handsome, and happy republican bard's wife. Royalty itself condescended to catch the infection of enthusiasm, and hence took place that famous interview between the king and the poet, whereof the German papers have talked so much. His majesty probably expected to convert the disciple of republicanism, as his well-known discourse indicates; for, likening the young missionary to Saul of Tarsus (indeed we know not why) he said he would find his Damascus somewhere: meaning that his conversion would one day happen, when no doubt his name would be changed from Herwegh to Von Herwegh.

But Herwegh still remains unconverted, although the courtiers say that his presence before Majesty had a prodigious effect upon him, and that the republican lion became exceedingly mild and abashed in presence of the awful royal animal.

To disprove in a manner this charge against his courage and constancy, Herwegh wrote the famous letter, which appeared in the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*; whereof the King of Prussia instantly interdicted the sale in his majesty's dominions. But it is probable that that well-conducted paper, which is liberal in its tendency, and manly in its tone, had already awakened the royal solicitude, before Herwegh's missive appeared in it: at least, other journals, Ruge's *Fahrbuch*, for instance, and the *Rheinische Zeitung*, have been abolished and interdicted, although Herwegh's name does not appear among their contributors.

Such, we are given to understand (by a countryman and very warm admirer of the author who neither knows, nor, we fear, will approve of our criticisms on his friend), have been

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our young author's *antécédens*. His opinions cannot, of course, be very precisely formalized in verse; but we gather, from a perusal of his volume, that they are of the strongest republican kind. His hatred of priests is intense. He says, "their temples are shut for him," and falls on them, whenever they come in his way, with bitter epithets of scorn. Kings he has in similar abhorrence, and, finally, he detests Frenchmen and Cossacks, as, perhaps, a hearty German should. "Woe to him," cries the young bard, "who trusts prematurely the son of the Frank. He brings our bride back, but it is when he is tired of kissing her." By which the poet means, no doubt, that the Germans are to work out their own freedom.

The general rising against priests and monarchs he foretells to be very close at hand, and his verses abound with numberless allusions to that event. "Tear the crosses from the earth (says he, in pursuance of his double purpose)*—tear up the crosses; they shall all be turned into swords, and God in Heaven will pardon the deed. Cease, ye bards, to sweat at verses; on the anvil lay the iron; Saviour shall the iron be." He, for his part, will no longer remain as of old, "and pass the hours midst idle flowers, with beauty near him—to battle ranks a charger's flanks, henceforth shall bear him† . . . Henceforth

* Reiss die Kreuze aus der Erden,
Alle sollen Schwerter werden,
Gott im Himmel wird's verzeihn.
Lasst oh lasst das Verseschweissen,
Auf den Ambos legt das Eisen,
Heiland soll das Eisen seyn!

† Nicht mehr in Blumenhügeln möcht
Ich liegen auf der Wacht,
In eines Streithengst's Bügeln möcht
Ich wiegen mich zur Schlacht.

* * *
Lasst endlich das Geleier seyn
Und rührt die Trommel nur;
Der Deutscher muss erst freier seyn,
Dann sey er Troubadour.

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he'll have no music save the trumpet's ringing. Be ye free men, O bards, and then resume your singing." He will write no more: he will go into the throng of the bravest, where action calls him. "Ho! bring me banners here!" concludes the poet, in the verses from which we quote.

It will be seen that, though Herwegh, the man, is disinclined to military service, Herwegh, the poet, has a great appetite for war; and indeed it is not once, nor twice, nor twenty times, that the sentiment is uttered in the course of his songs: but the shout "To arms!" is repeated almost *ad nauseam*, and the poets are ceaselessly enjoined to give up their guitars for battle-axes.

One may, in the first place, quarrel with the doctrine—from a firm belief that throat-cutting never advanced the cause of freedom much, that leaden types are better than leaden bullets, and that five hundred tons of iron hammered into swords will not farther liberty so much as the same quantity of metal laid out into railroads—but it is not of M. Herwegh's politics that we are anxious to speak, so much as of the quality of his poetry, and of his turn of mind. He is very young yet, very much intoxicated by his success; and the egotism, consequent on it, is quite ludicrously manifested in his book. In those visionary combats which he foretells, he himself is made to bear a very considerable share. He warns his love (what poet is without one?) that he must leave her, and that a dubious fate awaits him. He prophesies a "Thermopylæ, and many a grave in the shade," for himself and his brother warriors; he calls himself an eagle (he is very fond of instituting comparisons between himself and that royal bird*); he says the eagle will be captured, nay, that its fate may be still more summary and pathetic, and that he may fall under some tyrant's arrow, as well as be imprisoned in his cage.

* Du traumst vom Schmetterlinge, ich von Aar.
Vom hohen Thurme schauet ein Aar, etc.

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Wonderful indeed is the German capacity for belief. Go to a theatre to a dismal comedy of Kotzebue, and you will see the whole house in tears: the noble ladies in their exclusive tier of boxes, the citizens' wives opposite, the officers sobbing in the orchestra, the bourgeois and students whimpering in the pit. The faith is marvellous; and for all sorts of imaginary woes the easy tears are ever ready to gush. All the romances of all languages are read and wept over: Esmeralda, Smike, the Flower-girl of Pompeii: nay, heroines who have discoursed originally in Chinese or Sanskrit find ready translators to *verdeutschten* (bedutch) their histories, and in the German fons lacrymarum an abundant measure of sympathy.

There is a literary paper published at Berlin (we believe the *Morgenblatt*), which was mentioned some time ago, by a Quarterly reviewer, as having prefixed to a notice upon the work of an English author, the author's name inscribed in a wreath of laurel. The Quarterly reviewer cried out against the propriety of such a distinction for the writer in question; but the fact is, it was no distinction at all. It is a stereotype wreath in which every writer's name is enclosed. And so with the German public, there is a crown of laurel for everybody. The plentiful growth of that German evergreen must be borne in mind, when we consider how it has come to adorn so many heads so profusely; and we fear it is not by his crowns that we must judge of M. Herwegh's merits.

Let this most easy and catholic charity too be kept in view, when we consider the undeniable popularity which the poet has had; for if such fame as he has undeniably won, were only sparingly dealt out, and awarded in a few rare cases, one might be led to think that the opinions advocated in his five editions, had a corresponding number of believers in the country, and that Germany was on the eve of republicanism. But if we consider what *other* popularities there have been in the country; and how they have risen and fallen; and round what sort of brows, republican, monarchical, destructive, conservative,

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sceptic, angelic, satyric, mystic, that easy laurel wreath will fit ; we need not alarm ourselves prematurely with regard to a German revolution. The public has discovered a wild young man who sings in what is (happily) a new style ; and if they flock to listen to him, it is not, let us hope, so much on account of his opinions, as on account of their strangeness. They have been listening hitherto to artists, speculators, philosophers : here appears an author of quite a different nature, and they rush to the new exhibiter. There was—(this is a very uncomplimentary and familiar illustration)—there was a man hanged when the writer of this was at college, and that morning all the lecture-rooms were deserted.

Indeed, we must, then, think that it is the coarsest and worst part of M. Herwegh's genius which has occasioned his popularity, and that but for his ferocious descriptions of blood and slaughter, he might have written twice as well and been twice as much a republican, and yet scarcely found an admirer. And, for our parts, these dark prophecies and sanguinary images have excited in our minds anything but a feeling of terror. The man is not in the slightest degree, as we take it, a hero or a martyr, or an eagle, or a Spartan ; nor is his violence as likely to make such an impression in this phlegmatic country as it may have caused to our neighbours, who are more easily moved. There is scarce so much sedition in his poems as can be bought for fourpence in a Chartist newspaper ; and not more irreligion than might have been read the other day in Holywell-street, until Mr. Bruce ("turning his cross into a sword," as our poet has it) assaulted the obnoxious printshop. It may be true, that one day, as Herwegh sings, mankind shall be so pure as to form an universal priesthood ; and twenty years ago a lad rising at an university debating club, and proclaiming that event as imminent, might possibly have been applauded by some young philosophers present. But the razor crops off a number of those fancies which beset "the growing boy." Do we travel "further from the East" as we grow old? Please

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Heaven, not a jot. In youth or in age, an honest man is no nearer or farther from the sun : but he is not so restless after a time : and finding the world not altogether so bad, nor himself so gifted, leaves off abusing the one too much, and admiring the other, and so stays quiet, and hopes calmly for better things.

This is what our fiery young bard calls indifference, and it provokes greatly his restless, generous, eager spirit. He opens his book with an onslaught on Prince Puckler, the "Verstorbene," and lashes him gallantly for his weariness of life, his selfishness, and his affectation of *rouerie*. The satire applies to a school of German poets, who, it is said, have profited by it ; and the intelligent friend, from whom we had our account of Herwegh's private life, says, that his poetic influence has been of use in checking the sickly "Semilasso" style ; and that the young Germans are now following a heartier and healthier mode of thought.

He may be the destroyer of a prevalent cant or affectation, but can it be that Herwegh is the founder and father of a school ? Surely a young man of six-and-twenty, who is no great scholar, no great poet, can hardly be a *chef-d'école* in a country where learning and poetic genius are both so remarkable. We would hardly set Tom Dibdin to preside over a British poetic academy, although, perhaps, during the war time, no man's songs were more generally sung and rapturously encored. "The British Grenadiers" is as exciting to an Englishman as any war-song in our language : but we should hardly have made a laureat of the writer.

There is this, however, to be remembered in M. Herwegh's favour. That as "The British Grenadiers," a very humble and ordinary piece of poetry, does undeniably excite warlike and delightful emotions in the English mind : and if handed over to a foreigner, although the latter were quite conversant with our tongue, would probably call forth from him no enthusiasm whatever : so we may lose a great deal of the local allusions

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which make Herwegh's ballads precious, and cause them to ring in the souls of his German admirers.

Here is one of his ballads, which forms a sort of his key to his politics and poetry.

DAS LIED VOM HASSE.

Wohlauf! wohlauf! über Berg und
Fluss

Dem Morgenrot entgegen!
Dem treuen Weib den letzten Kuss
Und dann zum treuen Degen!
Bis unsre Hand in Asche stiebt
Soll sie vom Schwert nicht
lassen:
Wir haben lang genug geliebt
Und wollen endlich hassen!

Die Liebe kann uns helfen nicht,
Die Liebe nicht erretten,
Halt' du, O Hass! dein jüngst
Gericht,
Brich du, O Hass, die Ketten!
Und wo es noch Tyrannen giebt
Da lasst' uns keck erfassen:
Wir haben lang genug geliebt
Und wollen endlich hassen!

Wer noch ein Herz besitzt, dem
soll's
Im Hasse nur sich rühren;
Allüberall ist dürres Holz
Um unsre Glut zu schüren;
Die ihr die Freiheit noch verbleibt
Singt durch die Deutschen
Strassen.
Wir haben lang genug geliebt
Und wollen endlich hassen!

THE SONG OF HATRED.

Brave soldier, kiss the trusty wife,
And draw the trusty blade!
Then turn ye to the reddening
east,
In freedom's cause arrayed;
Till death shall part the blade and
hand,
They may not separate:
We've practised loving long
enough,
And come at length to hate!

To right us and to rescue us
Hath Love essayed in vain;
O Hate! proclaim thy judgment-
day
And break our bonds in twain.
As long as ever tyrants last
Our task shall not abate:
We've practised loving long
enough,
And come at length to hate!

Henceforth let every heart that
beats
With hate alone be beating—
Look round! what piles of rotten
sticks
Will keep the flame a heating—
As many as are free and dare
From street to street go say 't:
We've practised loving long
enough,
And come at length to hate!

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**Bekämpft sie ohn Unterlass
Des Tyrannei auf Erden ;
Und heiliger wird unsre Hass
Als unsre Liebe werden !
Bis unsre Hand, in Asche stiebt
Soll sie vom Schwert nicht
lassen.
Wir haben lang genug geliebt
Und wollen endlich hassen !**

**Fight tyranny, while tyranny
The trampled earth above is
And holier will our hatred be,
Far holier than our love is,
Till death shall part the blade and
hand,
They may not separate :
We've practised loving long
enough,
Let's come at last to hate !**

The German reader has no need to be told that the spirit of this rude hearty song has evaporated in the accompanying English version. "Wir haben lang genug geliebt und wollen endlich hassen" are gallant fierce lines of obloquy ; and the hissing of the word *hassen*, as well as the rattle and spirit of the double rhyme, are not to be had in English, where the versifier has but a poor stock of dissyllabic rhymes.

But with the exception of the words "über Berg und Fluss," which mean over mount and stream, but which for the rhyme's sake have been perverted into "in freedom's cause arrayed," the sense is pretty similar ; and the public will no doubt allow that there is no great portion of this quality in the ballad. Nor is there any variety of thought. "Love cannot help us ; love cannot rescue us ; down with tyrants." Many a set of conspirators have sung such a ditty on the theatrical boards, and so shouting "Death !" have marched off with tin battle-axes to drink small beer in the slips.

The *refrain*, however, is admirable. The song was written upon it evidently. Other men have written songs in the world besides George Herwegh, and know the value of those dashing sounding rhymes. But though such may pass muster on the boards aforesaid, great Poets are in the habit of producing different kind of wares. The very first poem, with its antithetic title, "From the living to the dead," contrasting the "Lebendige" Herwegh with the "Verstorbene" Muskau, had a touch of the

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theatre and the rivals, which led one to be suspicious as to the quality of the book.

We now come to another poem, in which martyrdom, republicanism, destruction of priesthood, and other favourite doctrines of the young bard, are given.

ZURUF.

Schaut der Sonne auferstehn!
Strahlend blickt sie in die
Runde—
Strahlend, wie zur ersten Stunde
Und hat viele Jahre Leid gesehn.

Wie's auch Stürme, haltet
Stand
Junge Herzen unverdrossen,
Der ihn einstens angegossen
Hat den Geist uns abermal gesandt.

Bald erschallt nach Ost and
West
Jubel Millionentönig,
Freiheit heisst der letzte König.
Und sein Reich bleibt ewig
Felsenfest.

* Nimmer schwingt in unsrem
Haus
Der Kosake seine Knute,
Unsre Deutsche Zauberruthe
Schlägt noch manchen goldnen
Frühling aus.

APPEAL.

1.

Behold, when the red sun appears,
He shineth as bright in his
station,
As he shone on his day of
creation,
Ere he looked on the woes of long
years.

2.

Young hearts be ye steady and
bold,
Confront ye the tempest un-
daunted,
For he who the Spirit has granted
Is with us to-day as of old.

3.

For the last of all kings, make ye
way,
A million glad voices proclaim
his
Avatar, and FREEDOM his name
is,
And boundless and endless his
sway.

* This stanza is quite beyond
the powers of the translator, and
indeed has been shown to a
German friend, who confesses that
he is at a loss regarding the mean-
ing of the last line.

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Junge Herzen unverzagt !
 Bald erscheint der neue Täufer
 Der Messias, der die Käufer,
 Und Verkäufer aus den Tempel
 jagt.

Und die Götter nicht allein—
 Schon der mensch wird heilig
 leben ;
*Priester nur wirds fürder geben,
 Und kein Laie mehr auf Erde seyn.*

Doch wie Donner est sein
 Gang
 Und er naht nicht unter Psal-
 men,
 Und man streut ihm heine Pal-
 men,
 Der Messias kommt mit Schwerter-
 klang.

Darum legt die Harfen ab !
 Lasst darin die Windsbraut
 spielen,
 Unser wartet Thermopylen,
 Perser—und in Schatten manchen
 Grab.

4.

Have courage, young hearts, never
 falter !
 He comes to the temple's high
 places,
 The mighty Messiah who chases
 The sellers and buyers from the
 altar.

5.

And not only heaven as of yore,
 But earth shall be pure and
 divine,
 One priesthood man's sanctified
 line,
 And laymen among us no more !

6.

Make way for our Saviour and
 Lord ;
 It is not with hymns that we
 greet him,
 It is not with palms that we
 meet him,
 But he comes with the clang of
 the sword.

7.

Then bards, lay aside for the blade,
 The harp and its idle diversions,
 Thermopylæ waits for our Per-
 sians,
 And many a grave in the shade !

If after having translated the above poem to the best of our ability, we may venture upon still further cruelties to it, and criticise it, we think the reader will agree with us, that though there is considerable energy of words and figures in the ode,—much blue lights and fierce grouping,—the thoughts are here, too, exceedingly rare, and the construction of the poem very careless. The new Divinity, who is to end the woes of the

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world, is compared to the Baptist, and to another character still more sacred, in the same sentence. Man's similarity to the gods, the abolition of the laity, the approach of the new Saviour, and Thermopylæ,—image upon image come crowding together; nor surely are they arranged with the precision of a master. Taken by itself, the last line is a fine one; but it has clearly no business in such a place as that where it is found. We shall be understood as desirous to speak only of the *manner* of the poem here, not to quarrel with the matter of it, which is open to a just, but a different line of censure.

When the French actor in the times of the revolution, and of the atheistic rage which characterized a part of that period, came to the footlights and defied Heaven, calling upon the Divinity, if Divinity there were, to prove His existence by striking the player dead there before the lamps: the unhappy wretch no doubt thought he was entering a very energetic protest against superstition, and that his action was a courageous and a sublime one. Before ten years are over, M. Herwegh will know that such coarse blasphemies are not in the least sublime or poetical; and (merely as a point of art) that this furious and mad kind of yelling is by no means a proof of superior energy or power. Even the Semilasso school, which he attacks, is a wholesomer one than his: for scepticism is much more humble than hatred; and a man whose unlucky temperament or course of thought has led him to doubt and be unhappy, is at least not so culpable as another, who sets himself up to propound new creeds, and to act as a prophet on his own account. This is the line which some silly French speculators have taken of late; such, for instance, as Leroux, Lamennais, and that questionable moral philosopher, George Sand. Not one of these but hints in his disquisitions, that he or she has a special mission from Heaven, and delivers oracles with an air of inspiration.

Our young poet, who, if we mistake not, in spite of his hatred for French politics, has drunk not a little at that extremely polluted well of French speculation (it were absurd to call it a

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science or a philosophy), labours too under a great consciousness of the tremendous importance of his own calling, and talks of the "himmlisch" or heavenly, as if he were urged by a direct afflatus from that quarter. Here is a sonnet in which he announces the existence of some such preternatural influences within him.

Trug ich ein Schwert als Krieger
um die Lenden,
Ging ich als Landmann hinter
einem Pfluge,
Dann säss' ich Abendsfroh bei
meinem Krüge
Um mit dem Tag mein Tagewerk
zu enden.

So aber, wenn sie sich zur Ruhe
wenden,
Schweift *mein* Geist noch auf irrem
Wanderzuge,
Und meine Seele kreist in stetem
Fluge,
Ihr will kein Abend seinen Frieden
spenden.

Dem Himmlischen erbaun wir
keine Schranken,
Es folgt uns nach im laute Weltge-
triebe,
Und wird im Schlummer auch
nicht von uns wanken.
Kein Ort—dass ich vor ihnen
sicher bliebe!
Gleich Blitzen zücken um mich
die Gedanken,
Und treffen mich selbst in dem
Arm der Liebe.

Wore I a soldier's weapon on my
thigh,
Drove I a rustic's plough upon the
lea,
At early eve I'd fling my labours
by,
And drink my homely cup and so
be free.

Such calm for spirits like mine
may never be,
My soul hath restless pinions and
will fly,
Still eager soaring higher and
more high,
And the kind evening brings no
rest for me.

We raise not barriers to the
Heavenly thus,
Thought tracks us on the wide
world's busy ways,
It watches when we sleep—there
is no place,
To shelter from that constant
genius!
Its lightnings round about us ever
blaze,
And even in love's arms it reaches
us.

The last line is surely of French origin. That mixture of earth and heaven, that vast celestial genius, and the quarter in which it is sometimes discoverable, are worthy of the peculiar

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philosophy which always takes such an occasion to manifest its claims to divinity. Depend upon it that some years hence, when M. Herwegh, the worshipped of silly Berliners no more (ere then they will have consecrated and pulled down a dozen other altars)—when M. Herwegh shall be a quiet family man, with his rich wife, and comfortable house and family he will find out his mistake respecting the superhuman origin of his poems. It is not on every occasion, or in behalf of every young poet, that Heaven is called on to inspire. *Nec Deus intersit*, &c. We cannot do better than abide by the safe old maxim; and in solving the small question why this or that bard is induced to write, we cannot decently ask the gods to interfere.

In the following pretty lines our author gives some advice to a lady who is tempted to publish her verses :

Du willst den Lorber auf den
Locken drücken
Nicht einsam mehr in stillen
Nächten beten ;
Hin auf den Markt mit Deinen
Thränen treten,
Ein müssig Volk mit Deinem
Schmerz beglücken.

Nur Rosen sollten Deine Stirne
schmucken
Und nicht die Martyrkrone des
Poeten,
Das ist fürwahr der Mund nicht
zum Profeten
Und würd mit Küssen leichter uns
entzücken.

Dass meine Nachtigall im Dun-
keln bliebe
Schwer wird die Höh' nach der
Du Strebst, erklommen

On humble knees of silent nights
No more my lady prays ;
But now in glory she delights,
And pines to wear the bays.
The gentle secrets of her heart
She'd tell to idle ears,
And fain would carry to the mart
The treasure of her tears !

When there are roses freshly
blown
That forehead to adorn,
Why ask the Poet's martyr-
crown,—
The bitter wreath of thorn ?
That lip which all so ruddy is,
With freshest roses vying,
Believe me, sweet, was made to
kiss,
Not formed for prophesying.

Remain, my nightingale, remain,
And warble in your shade !
The heights of glory were in vain
By wings like yours essayed ;

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Wär's auch dass Dich ein stärker
Genius triebe.
Nur Hekatomben worden ange-
nommen
Auf dem Altar des Ruhms ; auf
dem der Liebe—
O Liebe ! ist ein Schärfflein auch
willkommen.

And while at Glory's shrine the
Priest
A hecatomb must proffer,
There's Love—oh, Love ! will
take the least
Small mite the heart can offer.

Are they hecatombs exactly which M. Herwegh has offered at the shrine of the muses ? If we may judge of German oxen (and Sir Robert Peel has given us an opportunity since the new tariff), our Poet has not slaughtered a vast number of them, although his knife is as large, and his air as solemn, and the drapery of his robe as princely arranged, as that of many other sacrificers. No, no, most of these we take to be French animals : of that four-legged sort, which, as we read in the story, once tried to puff themselves out, and to look as large as oxen, but failed in their swelling endeavour, and disappeared with a most lamentable and pathetic explosion.

Perhaps it is from hearing that the young poet was at one period of his life occupied in translating Lamartine's verses, that we are led to fancy his manner has been formed not a little on French models. Some of his epigrammatic turns in this manner are very neat and happy : as, for instance :

Wieder weil ein Jahr verging
Sprudelt man Sonette,
Singt von einem neuen Ring
An der alten Kette.*

And the song to Béranger, written with a refrain, quite in the French way, contains something far better, and has some passages of exceeding tenderness and beauty.

Er küsste jede Freiheit in der Wiege,
Er weinte jeder in der Grabe nach ;
Er war der zweiter Held bei jedem Siege,
Er rief den Donner für Tyrannen wach.

* "Once more because the year is done, they are clinking their sonnets, singing of a new link added to the old chain."

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Wer lag am Boden den Er nicht erhoben ?
Und wessen Herz ist seinem Lied zu klein ?
Wo ist die Hütte drum Er nicht gewoben
Hätt' einen Paradieses-heiligenschein ? *

Here are some fine lines of hearty satire :

Der Fischer Petrus breitet aus
Aufs neue seine falschen Netze.
Wohlauf! beginn mit ihm den Strauss,
Damit nicht einst im Deutschen Haus
Noch gelten römische Gesetze.
Bei jenem grossen Frederick nein.
Das soll doch nun und nimmer seyn,
Dem Pfaffen bleibe nicht der Stein
An dem er sein Dolche wetze ! †

And we have marked out a couple more ballads, of which the first is serious, and with a wild sadness in the metre, which lies beyond our humble powers of translation.

Was soll der Becher
Ihr tobenden Zecher,
Was soll die funkelnde Flasche
In eurer Hand ?
Es trauert in Sack und Asche
Das Vaterland.

Was soll ihr Bräute
Das Jübelgeläute ?
O heisst die Rosen erblassen
Am Deutschen Strand,
Vom Brautigam ist verlassen
Das Vaterland.

* " He kissed each Freedom in its cradle and followed it weeping to its grave. He was the second hero at every victory. He called down thunder on all tyrants. Who was ever cast down but Béranger uplifted him ; and what sorrow was too humble for his song to pity ? What hut is there, but he has surrounded it with a halo borrowed from Heaven ? "

† " The Fisher Petrus spreads his false nets abroad once more—Come on ! begin the strife with him, that it never may be said that Roman law passed in a German house. No ! by the name of Frederick, no ! We swear that it never shall be so ; and that the priest shall not have a stone left to him whereon to whet his dagger. "

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Was soll ihr Fürsten
Nach Kronen das Dürsten?
Zerreisst die goldenen Schnüre,
Das Prunkgewand!
Es frieret vor eurer Thüre
Das Vaterland.
Was mach, ihr Pfaffen,
Euch also zu schaffen,
Was soll uns jetzo das Beten,
O eitler Tand,
So lang in den Staub getreten
Das Vaterland!
Weh euch ihr Reichen,
Die nicht zu erweichen,
Ihr zahlt die Rubel die Runden,
Im Sonnenbrand,
Der Lazarus seine Wunden,
Das Vaterland.
Weh euch, ihr Armen,
Was heischt ihr Erbarmen?
Es liegen viel Edelsteine
Vor euch im Sand,
Auch meine Thräne auch meine
Ums Vaterland.
Doch du, O Dichter,
Bist nimmer der Richter,
Gebeut der fertigen Zungen,
Gebeut ihr Stand,
Dein Schwanenlied ist gesungen
Dem Vaterland.

To the reader unfamiliar with German, we can only offer the following bare version of the lines.

Comrade, why the song so joyous—why the goblet in your hand?
While, in sackcloth and in ashes, yonder weeps our Fatherland.
Still the bells, and bid the roses—wither, girls, on German strand;
For deserted by her bridegroom, yonder sits our Fatherland.
Wherefore strive for crowns, ye princes?—quit your state, your
jewels grand,
See where at your palace portal, shivering sits our Fatherland.
Idle priestlings, what avails us—prayer and pulpit, cowl and band?
Trodden in the dust and groaning, yonder lies our Fatherland.

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Counting out his red round rubles, yon sits Dives smiling bland—
Reckoning his poor wounds and sores, Lazarus, our Fatherland.

Wo, ye poor ! for priceless jewels lie before ye in the sand,
Even my tears, my best and brightest ! lie there, wept for Father-
land !

But, O poet, cease thy descant—'tis not thine as judge to stand,
Silence now—the swan hath sung his death-song for our Fatherland.

This is the second—and last.

PROTEST.

So lang ich noch ein Protestant,
Will ich auch protestiren,
Und Jeder deutscher Musikant
Soll's weiter musikiren.
Singt alle Welt DER FREIE Rhine,
So sing doch ich, ihr Herren nein !
Der Rhein der Rhein konnt' freier
seyn,
So will ich Protestiren.

Kaum war die Taufe abgethan
Ich kroch noch auf den vieren,
Da fing ich schon voll Glauben's an
Mit Macht zu protestiren.
Und protestirte fort und fort,
O wort und wind, O wind und
wort,
O selig sind, die hier und dort
Auf ewig Protestiren.

Nur eins ist Not, dran halt' ich
fest,
Und will es nit verlieren,
Das ist mein christlicher Protest,
Mein christlich Protestiren.
Was geht mich all das Wasser an
Vom Rheine bis zum Ocean ?
Sind keine freie Männer dran,
So will ich Protestiren.

THE PROTEST.

As long as I'm a Protestant
I'm bounden to protest,
Come every German musicant
And fiddle me his best.
You're singing of "the Free old
Rhine,"
But I say no, good comrades, mine,
The Rhine could be
Greatly more free,
And that I do protest.

I scarce had got my christening
o'er,
Or was in breeches drest,
But I began to shout and roar,
And mightily protest.
And since that time I've never
stopt,
My protestations never dropped ;
And blest be they
Who every way
And everywhere protest.

There's one thing certain in my
creed,
And schism is all the rest,
That who's a Protestant indeed,
For ever must protest.
What is the river Rhine to me ?
For from its source unto the sea
Men are not free,
What e'er they be,
And that I do protest.

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Von nun an bis zum Ewigkeit
 Soll euch der Name zieren,
 So lang ihr Protestanten seyt,
 Musst ihr auch Protestiren.
 Und singt die Welt der *Freie*
 Rhein,
 So singet ach ihr Herren nein !
 Der Rhein der Rhein konnt freier
 seyn
 Wir müssen Protestiren.

And every man in reason grants,
 What always was confest,
 As long as we are Protestants,
 We sternly must protest.
 And when they sing "the Free
 old Rhine,"
 Answer them, "No," good com-
 rades, mine,
 The Rhine could be
 Greatly more free,
 And that you shall protest.

The satire here is an honest and fair one : nor indeed is it easy, amidst the vast multitude of German songs, to fix upon a poorer effusion than that pompous ballad of Becker's which obtained, and possibly still possesses, such a wonderful popularity. National songs must be made of better and simpler stuff if they are to endure for more than a day ; and the only excuse for the German public in admiring Becker's ditty as they unquestionably did, is that the song expresses a national feeling which was exceedingly strong at the time, and was sung, not as a poetical composition, but as a protest against the insults of the French.

A far cleverer person than Becker is M. Herwegh ; for the performances of the former are characterized, as far as we have seen them, by an irredeemable dulness and pomposity, which never deviates into poetry or sense. Herwegh, on the contrary, has fancy, wit, and strong words at command. He has a keen eye for cant, too, at times ; and in the Sonnet to the Poetess which we have quoted, and in another on German mystical Painting for which we have not space, shows himself to be a pretty sharp and clear-headed critic of art. But it is absurd to place this young man forward as a master. His poetry is a convulsion, not an effort of strength ; he does not sing, but he roars, his dislike amounts to fury ; and we must confess that it seems to us, in many instances that his hatred, and heroism, are quite factitious, and that his enthusiasm has a very

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calculating look with it. Fury, to be effective either in life or in print, should, surely, only be occasional. People become quite indifferent to wrath which is roaring, and exploding all day : as gunners go to sleep upon batteries. Think of the prodigious number of appeals to arms that our young poet has made in the course of these pages ; what a waving and clatter of flashing thoughts ; what a loading and firing of double-barrelled words ; and, when the smoke rolls off, nobody killed ! And a great mercy it is too for that cause of liberty which, no doubt, the young man has at heart, that the working out of it is not intrusted to persons of his flighty temperament. No man was made to be hated ; no doctrines of peace and good-will can be very satisfactorily advocated by violence and murder ; nor can good come out of evil, as is taught in those old-fashioned " temples " which our young bard says he cannot frequent. Is he much better or happier where he is ?

But the wonder is, what could the public want with a half-score of editions of his works ? If we were disposed to take an angry or misanthropical turn, the anger should vent itself, not so much on the young man, as on the large portion of the human race which has encouraged him by purchasing his poems. Will they encourage him equally when he does something infinitely better ? The blessed chance lies entirely open to both parties.

BALZAC ON THE NEWSPAPERS OF PARIS.

“WITH whom is M. de Balzac angry?” exclaimed Jules Janin, on reading this odd production, and forthwith seized his critical pen, to show that Balzac is the most ungrateful of authors. For ten years, it would seem, this Balzac plodded his weary way, under the unnoticed pseudonyme of Saint Aubin, one failure following another, until, by chance, the “*Enfant Maudit*,” in the pages of a Review, attracted general attention: the newspapers praised, the masque fell, and the name of Balzac became known to fame. This is Janin’s ground for a charge of bitter ingratitude against Balzac. But with due respect to M. Janin, we cannot in this discover the extent of obligation, asserted by the champion of the press. Ten long years of persevering toil, ten years of uncheered, unmarked exertion, would have broken down many a man of less resolute will: and when, at last, the public is struck by one of those tales which glide into the traditions of a people, the press, following the movement of admiration, turns suddenly round, and affects the right, first to take the hitherto neglected novelist under its own supreme protection, and then, on the first show of difference between them, to charge him with base ingratitude to his self-elected protector!

We are nevertheless inclined to echo Janin’s question. We have failed to discover with whom exactly Balzac is angry. His object in his brochure would seem to be to describe in no very poetic terms the machinery of the Paris press, and so to strip it of the effect produced by mystery. His motive we have

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yet to learn. Janin, in his bitter feuilleton, sets it down as compounded of enormous self-conceit, jealousy of writers who have become more popular than himself, and hatred of critics who have contributed to make them so. He more than hints, too, that Balzac's failure in a journal he started for himself has had not a little to do with it. But perhaps, after all, Balzac had no motive. He may have been actuated simply by whim. Without at any rate further troubling ourselves as to the author's motive, or the critic's wrath, we shall endeavour to follow M. de Balzac, supplying facts where he deals but in allusions, and giving names which, familiar to the Parisian public, would not be easily recognizable on this side the channel, through the delicate take-for-granted touches of the celebrated novelist.

The "Monographie" is a paper supplied to a work in course of publication, entitled *La Grande Ville: Nouveau Tableau de Paris*, in which are associated several celebrated names. The work is illustrated by Gavarni, a masterly caricaturist, and other artists of extraordinary talent.

M. de Balzac's paper is preceded by a synoptical table, marking every shade of the order "Gendeletré:" the hint of which name he professes to have borrowed from Gendarme, implying that he respects one as much as the other: which, by the way, is rather a dull joke. He divides his order into two species—the publicist and the critic; and from these he traces several supposed kinds, as if he were a Cuvier, dealing with some newly-discovered races of animals. For these he invents names arbitrarily, which, as they do not carry with them any very striking sense or humour, we spare our readers the trouble of spelling over.

M. de Balzac tells us, that when the director of the journal is at the same time the chief editor, and responsible proprietor, he is the person with whom each cabinet deals: while, at the same time, the secret influence which absolutely regulates the journal may be that of an actress, or a legitimate wife. To furnish the key to the first allusion would be to deal in a piece

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of unnecessary scandal ; but all the world will easily recognise in the second, Madame de Girardin, the Vicomte de Launay of *La Presse* ; for Madame Dudevant is not the only lady who writes under a masculine name.

Balzac next proceeds to the second variety of the same species, which he calls the tenor—or, to drop the metaphorical name, the editor, simply. With him he thus deals : “At this trade it is difficult for a man not to pervert his mind and sink into mediocrity. Because there are but two moulds, into which are cast the leading articles : the opposition mould, and the ministerial mould. There is a third, but it is rarely used. Let the government act as it will, the writer of the opposition leaders must blame, scold, and advise. The ministerial writer is equally bound to defend. The one is a constant negative—the other a constant affirmative.” This is no doubt true enough, and there was no particular necessity to announce it as a discovery. Balzac is better where he describes the part played by the public.

At each event the subscriber goes asleep, saying to himself, “I will see to-morrow what says my journal upon the subject.” But there being facts for the public which cannot be told, and a necessity for twisting and distorting those which can, the satirist’s conclusion is, that the press is by no means the master of that “liberty” which it is supposed to enjoy. To its shame, says Balzac, it is only “free” against weak and isolated classes. And then we have told, by an exquisitely humorous pencil, what M. de Balzac’s pen hesitates to give : M. Thiers commanding batteries which are easily recognisable, as the *Siècle*, *Courier Français*, and *Constitutionnel*.

Balzac gives a pleasant example of the machinery by which the public mind is kept irritated against England. In a dead calm of the political ocean, this news arrives from Ausburg (Ausburg being for journalism, what Nuremberg is for children, a factory of playthings) :

“On dit that the English Legation gave a dinner to Lord Willgoud, on his way to Galucho (Brésil), at which assisted all the corps

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diplomatique, except the French Consul. Such an omission, under present circumstances, is not without meaning."

Upon this piece of news the opposition papers lash themselves into well-acted indignation, ignorant that there is no such admiral as Willgoud, and no such place as Galucho; and here the reader is presented with admirable imitations of all the leading journals, done with real wit. Balzac adds to his own satirical remarks on this part of his subject, the following very amusing commentary: "One phrase combined thus, after three forms, suffices to enable the majority of the French every morning to form an opinion upon all possible events. After the triumph of July, an old tenor acknowledged that for twelve years he never wrote but the same article. This frank fellow is dead." We believe the author of this whimsical confession was M. Chatelain, editor of the *Courier Français*, an extreme liberal.

In his parody of the *Débats*, Balzac adds, in a parenthesis to each high-flown passage—" (price 5000 francs per month) "—the supposed "subvention" paid to M. Bertin by the government. The ministerialists do not, however, enjoy a monopoly of corruption, for the puritans of the opposition, who cannot accept favours for themselves, harass the government with demands for places for their relatives. The family Barrot, according to Balzac, enjoy among them 130,000 francs of government pay! Before we leave the "publicist" division, we must say, that the attacks are made far too indiscriminately; that the editorial talents are rated obviously too low; and that the whole division on the system of reporting the debates in the Chambers ("Les Camarillistes"), is a violent exaggeration.

There is an amusing page upon what the French call "canards" (ducks), which appear to be the very poetry of penny-a-lining. Napoleon had pensioned a man, who for five years published in the *Moniteur*, fictitious bulletins of a war of the *Affghans against the English*; the fraud was discovered,

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and Napoleon, instead of punishing the fellow, is said to have increased his pension—the cheat “*était si bien conçue dans les intérêts de Napoléon.*” These bulletins were “canards.” The story of Gaspard Hauser was a “canard ;” so was that of Clara Wendel, and the brigand Schubry. As M. de Balzac does not give names, we may take upon ourselves to state, that the makers of these “canards” were authors of repute, M. Méry and M. Nestor Roqueplan. M. Etienne, of the *Constitutionnel*, was, under the restoration, a famous inventor of “canards.” (He seems meditating one at p. 145 !) His line lay in the fabrication of refusals by priests of the rights of burial, and of persecutions of liberal “*curés.*” But he was obliged to give these up, for truth overtook him.

In the division on the critics, M. de Balzac exhausts every form of severity. He sets no bounds to his anger with them, more especially for the neglect with which they treat works deserving of attention, while they reserve their exclusive and fulsome notice for trashy vaudevilles. He assigns for these degrading preferences the most degraded motives: contrasting the pleasurable “*quid pro quo*” of theatres, with the cold comfort of libraries and booksellers. And he goes so far as to say, that the conduct of the critics, in this respect, has caused of late years a sensible diminution in the sale of good books of every class. Upon Janin he deals the severest ridicule, by an admirable mimicry of that writer’s torrent of volubility on every kind of subject, while he never once touches the single special subject, which he pretends to be treating. Of this redoubtable feuilletonist, he also takes another occasion to mention (the allusion, at p. 170, is plainly levelled at Janin), that what he thinks the most eminently droll thing in the world, and in the very highest taste, is to be shaking hands with you, and passing for your friend, when he is all the while stinging you with the poisoned needles of his feuilletons. If, indeed, he has happened to praise you in a Paris journal, you are then quite sure, that in some London journal he has “assassinated” you. M. de Balzac

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fails to add, which particular London journal it is that is honoured by Jules Janin's contributions.

Towards the conclusion of the paper there are some remarks on the professed dealers in bon mots and witty sayings, uninspired by whose gaiety and mirthfulness, Balzac can only heave a sigh. "Hélas, la France est colossale jusque dans ses petitesse, jusque dans ses vices, jusque dans ses fautes!" Yet at the Charivari, "le Matador des petits journaux," he finds himself relax a little. Three thousand subscribers, he says, support this "délit perpétuel," and he admits its exhaustless flow of wit and humour. The writers in this class of journals he collects under the term "le pêcheur à la ligne:" because the wits, like the fishermen, live by their "line." The great characteristic of the trade, Balzac adds, is that the most vigorous mind, once engaged in it, is soon incapable of the sentiment of anything great. Making every thing little in mockery, it finds in time, as far as itself is concerned, every thing little in reality.

The conclusion will probably interest our readers, by the comparison introduced between the press of Paris and London.

"The press of London has not upon the world the same action as that of Paris: it is in some degree confined to England, which carries its egotism into everything; such egotism merits being called patriotism, for what is patriotism, but the egotism of a whole country? Thus ought to be observed the wide difference which exists between English journalists and French journalists. An English journalist is an Englishman first, a journalist after. The French journalist is above all things a journalist. Thus the English journalist would never commit the fault of publishing cabinet secrets, if such were calculated to mar a public advantage; while for sake of a few subscribers, a French journal would blab anything. Abd-el-Kader said his best spies were the French journals. Yesterday a paper advocated the prior right of England to the Marquesas; and that paper calls itself the *National*. Between the chances of an overthrow and the liberty of the press Napoleon did not hesitate."

Here M. de Balzac falls into the spirit of exaggeration, of which he accuses the press; and indeed it must be said of the whole exposé, that it is rather curious than edifying.

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But we cannot leave it without a more explicit mention of the wood-cut illustrations. These have a genius in them, which in the paper itself is certainly not discoverable. The likenesses of the various editors and writers are caught in the most perfect manner of this department of the art. No names are given, no clues are given; but the brethren of the press will recognise each other. There never was such hitting "between wind and water!" Observe the agitated frenzy of M. Pierre Leroux (p. 165), with divorce, dissolution, disruption, George Sandism, in every part of his aspect and attire; hair, nose, mouth, and dressing-gown; to say nothing of the awful chasm which yawns between the waistcoat and the portion of dress which may not be named. Contrast it with the sleek satisfaction of M. Hypolite Lucas, who in the garb of an "épicier" is mildly serving out inexhaustible lees of sugar; a thing he is currently said to do to every author *excepting M. de Balzac*. Turn from the stolid, innocent-looking, antediluvian figure (p. 179), which does nothing but praise the past (M. Gustave Planche), to the snarling, snapping, bearded poodle (p. 185: significant tail-piece to a parody on Janin's "Feuilletons"), * which only bites

* The conclusion of Janin's criticism of this "Monographie," in the *Journal des Débats* of a few days since, is so extremely characteristic of the writer, and contains such a pithy summary of the abusive phrases used against the press by Balzac, that we think we shall contribute not a little to the reader's amusement, by appending it here. Translation is, of course, quite out of the question. It contains, it will be seen, the allusion to Balzac's own experiment in journalism to which reference has been made:—"Eh quoi! cet homme, a qui nous avons reconnu tant d'esprit à tant de reprises différentes, vit du journal, et même d'une foule du journal; il n'eût jamais vécu sans le journal; il a été directeur-ré-dacteur-en-chef-gérant-tenor-maitre - Jacques-camarilliste-premier-Paris-fait - Paris-faiseur - d'articles - de - fond - maitre - Jacques-marchand-de-canards - camarilliste homme - politique - attaché-attaché-détaché-politique-à brochures - pamphlétaire-traducteur-critique blond-grand critique - euphuiste - prosateur - farceur - universitaire - mondain-thuriféraire-exécuteur-bravo-guerillero-pêcheur à la ligne-blaqueur, et même, ce qui est plus grave, banquier d'un journal dont il était ainsi le seul, unique et perpétuel-gendelette; ce journal si bien administre, si

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and walks on its hind legs. Then contemplate "dans l'intérieur" (p. 173), the gentleman extended, smoking on the sofa, and the young lady in easy dishabille in possession of the hearth-rug; the young lady reading the book aloud, concerning which the gentleman (whom his friends will recognise) means to be terribly moral, and to cry from the roofs of the houses, "Où allons nous?" Others of these inimitable pieces of graphic humour we have noticed before, but a whole article might be written upon them. What a fine satire is that (p. 152), where the Rhine, a jovial old reedy deity, is in an uplifted state of exaggerated admiration at the great man, who has come all the way from Paris, not to see the good old river, but that the good old river may see him. Wonderful and impenetrable is the collection (p. 137) of heads, constituting the readers of a large circulation "une masse." Of another style is the laborious abstraction of the old scholar (p. 171), which may not impossibly be thought somewhat affecting. As for the very elegant sketch (p. 207), in which George Sand so affably receives Lamennais, we defy that lady's admirers (of whom with due reservation, we profess ourselves), to be other than grateful and contented therewith. And to conclude, for the very whimsical parley on the closing page, between the press (a very excited and unreasonable old woman), and M. de Balzac (himself a quiet,

admirablement rédigé, si habilement conduit, si admirablement écrit, et signé par un si grand nom, n'as pas vécu six mois; et maintenant ce journaliste, le plus impuissant, le plus maladroit et le plus dénigrant des journalistes, viendrait, de gaieté de cœur, accabler de ses injures ceux dont il n'a pas pu se maintenir le confrère; il pourrait leur dire impunément: Vous êtes tous des voleurs, des menteurs, des imbécilles, des universitaires, des marquis de Tuffières et des blagueurs; vous êtes laids, vous êtes vieux, vous êtes mal peignés, vous avez de faux toupets, vous êtes d'ignobles bourgeois; il pourrait les dénoncer dans leurs travaux passés, dans leurs travaux à venir, dans leur position présente; et le pamphlet de cet homme passerait sans examen, sans critique, sans réponse! Véritablement la chose serait trop facile et trop commode; à ce compte-là ce serait pousser trop loin les privilèges du *gendeleltre*,—rienologue, —faiseur de tartines—guerillero et négateur."

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reasonable, very stout, long-haired, somewhat stooping little man), we cannot but think that the editor or critic who has felt himself most deeply insulted and aggrieved through the other seventy-nine pages of this curious production will, when he arrives at that eightieth page, lay it down with a burst of good-humoured laughter.

ENGLISH HISTORY AND CHARACTER ON THE FRENCH STAGE.

THE atmosphere of the French Academy, which has always had an unhappy influence upon the genius of dramatic writers, has lately transformed Eugene Scribe, the Vaudevilliste, into a Professor of English History. In the pursuit of this new vocation, the learned lecturer has discovered to his exceeding mirth, that the historical trophies of England are in general but the result of some mean accident, which entirely strips them of their ideal glory ; and his success has, as usual, called a host of imitators into the field. The Sorbonne is transferred to the Théâtre Français, and Scribe takes the place of Guizot. The dramatic doctrinaire, with his " Verre d'Eau " before him, without which French professors cannot speak, broaches his leading doctrine, worthy of the attempt and of the occasion, in the words of his second title : " Great Effects from little Causes." Having illustrated this from the reign of Queen Anne, he plunges half a century deeper into our annals, and, side by side, with the " Fils de Cromwell," brings up General Monk, to make him relate to a Parisian audience, how love of a gentle fair one, of whose name the uninquiring English had never heard, converted the old Roundhead into a cavalier, and so brought about the restoration. No longer let us wonder, then, why our second Charles devoted himself to the fair. Eugene Scribe has for ever silenced the wicked satirists or dull moralists, who expose or reflect upon the gallantries of the Merry Monarch.

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The "Verre d'Eau" is founded upon an anecdote to the effect, be it fabulous or true, that the Duchess of Marlborough, during the period of her ascendancy over Queen Anne, in a fit of anger allowed a glass of water to spill upon the robe of her royal mistress. To this circumstance, designed or accidental, is attributed, by our French professor, the fall of the favourite : the overthrow of the Whigs : the Duke of Marlborough's deprivation of command : and that peace with France, which probably saved the last days of the once great Louis the Fourteenth some deeper disasters and humiliations. M. Scribe seizes upon the anecdote for the purpose of illustrating his favourite maxim, that the most important public events turn frequently, if not always, upon accidents of a contemptible character. But M. Scribe is as wrong in his general principle, as he is mistaken in the bearing of the present particular fact, assuming it to be true. Trivial circumstances are in this life pretexts, not causes, for breaches of long-established connexions. They are the ready available facts which discover the depth of an existing difference ; they are seized to decide an already established rupture. Such an occurrence as the falling of a glass of water could, if an accident, have been apologized for and explained, unless indeed, as a pretext, it had been wanted and watched for. If, on the other hand, as M. Scribe assumes, the Duchess did insolently commit an outrage upon the queen, by purposely letting fall a glass of water, then the cause ceases to be petty ; for as human society is constituted, an insult, no matter how followed by important consequences, is held to be adequate to any result. But this principle of mean causes and mighty effects runs throughout the whole of this politico-philosophical comedy. Comedy, indeed ! The victorious progress of Marlborough and Prince Eugene stopped ; the fortunes of England in the balance ; the fate of France, too, as a nation ; all depending upon the tremor of a hand which offered a glass of water. *That*, a comedy ! Shakspeare felt not so, when he described in his inspired, and because inspired, profoundly

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human lines, "the tricks of man, dressed in a little brief authority," as "making angels weep." Accidents arising even from the infirmities of human temper, when they affect human destinies, are no longer subjects for laughter; and the levity with which historical circumstances of great political import are treated in these comedies, is assuredly no very gratifying evidence of the spirit of the time. It is the antagonist of reverence: not only of reverence for things sacred, but of reverence for historical and traditional associations—for great names and great characters. We quarrel with it as an unwise and unmannerly invasion of the comic drama. We have already had enough of it in the sombre melodramas of the Porte Saint Martin, and it is with pain we see it take the ground occupied hitherto by the pleasant spirit of Molière.

The political hero, so to speak, of the "*Verre d'Eau*," is Bolingbroke, reduced, in M. Scribe's hands, to a small intriguer. The romantic hero is a young protégé of the statesman, named Masham. The heroine, Abigail, afterwards the famous Mrs. Masham, is the daughter of Mr. Tomwood, a jeweller in the city. Bolingbroke, like Archimedes, wants only a place on which to rest his foot, to disturb the course of the whole political world; and true to his leading maxim of great effects from little causes, he discovers in this pair of simple beings, the very tools for his purpose. The manner in which Miss Abigail Tomwood is introduced at court, shows M. Scribe's ready method of inventing expedients. Queen Anne, according to our dramatic historian, loved to lay aside the oppressive state of royalty; but far from seeking her pleasure, as Pope would have it, on the "bosom of the silver Thames," she loved better, like Charles Lamb, the streets of London, where she could look at the shops, gossip with her trusty subjects the shopkeepers' wives and daughters, and make little purchases. Among shops distinguished thus by the royal favour, was that of Mr. Tomwood; in which, one day, the Queen having bought a trinket (a trifle of only thirty guineas' worth), she found she had forgot

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her purse, and was blushing before Abigail, when Miss A. put an end to the embarrassment by requesting the unknown lady to put the trinket in her pocket, and pay for it the next fine day she happened to be passing in the neighbourhood. The Queen hereupon followed up her first act of simplicity by a second. She gave the jeweller's daughter her address, and a pressing invitation to call upon her, with a view of providing for Abigail a place in the household of the Duchess of Northumberland; for her majesty had learned, in the course of confidential communications in the shop, that old Tomwood was on the eve of bankruptcy. When Abigail calls the next morning, she to her surprise meets Masham, who at that moment is talking politics with Lord Bolingbroke; while his lordship, so far from feeling himself interrupted, at once takes Miss Tomwood into the conversation. Bolingbroke recognises the handwriting, giving the unknown lady's address, to be that of the Queen; and his fertile brain, upon this frail ground, proceeds without delay to build up a magnificent scheme. Abigail shall be the favourite of the Queen; Masham shall rule Abigail; he rules Masham. Taking for granted, then, on the spot, that the whole plan is settled according to his wishes, he opens to the eyes of the city girl, the state of relations between France and England, and informs her that she is to play a great part in the affairs of the two nations. His immediate object is to have a letter from the French ambassador secretly presented to the Queen. The new political pupil of Bolingbroke naturally doubts her power of presenting an ambassador. She is *si peu de chose*. We shall give what follows, because it contain the whole doctrine of Bolingbroke and M. Scribe, as to great effects and little causes.

Bolingbroke.—You must not despise petty things—they produce great effects. You perhaps think, like all the world, that revolutions, political catastrophes, the fall of empires, proceed from grave, profound, and important causes. What a mistake! States, it is true, are subdued or led by heroes, by great men; but these great men are themselves led by their passions, their caprices, their vanities; that is to say, by all that in this world is most mean and miserable. You are

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not aware that a dispute about a window at Trianon, condemned by Louis XIV. and defended by Louvois, caused the very war which now inflames Europe. To the wounded vanity of a courtier, the kingdom owes its disasters; to some more trifling cause, it shall, perhaps, yet owe its preservation; and, without going farther, I, who speak to you, I, Henry St. John, who, to the age of 26 years, was looked upon as a dandy, incapable of serious occupations—do you know how I became a statesman, a member of parliament, and a minister?

Abigail.—No, really.

Bolingbroke.—*Eh bien*, my dear girl; I was made minister because I danced the sarabande; and I lost power by a cold.

Abigail.—Is it possible?

Bolingbroke (*Looking towards the Queen's apartment*).—I will tell you all about it another time—and how, without allowing myself to be depressed, I fight at my post in the ranks of the conquered.

Abigail.—And what can you do?

Bolingbroke.—Wait and hope.

Abigail.—Some great revolution?

Bolingbroke.—Not at all—a chance, a caprice of fate, a grain of sand, to overturn the car of triumph.

Abigail.—But you cannot create this grain of sand.

Bolingbroke.—True; but finding it, I can push it under the wheel. 'Tis not for talent to thrust itself in the way of providence, and create events—but to profit by them as they come. The more trifling in appearance, the greater their effect. Great effects from Little causes: such is my doctrine. I rely upon it, and you shall see proof of my being right.

Here the Duchess of Marlborough enters, and between the politician and her grace are exchanged some sharp sarcasms, which are interrupted by Bolingbroke presenting Abigail, and stating her claims. So backed, these are of course treated with scorn; but Bolingbroke has the means of carrying his point. "*Abigail is a Churchill!*" upon hearing which, the duchess exclaims "*O Ciel!*" and Bolingbroke follows up the effect with the following singular threat:

"You understand, madam, that for me, who am a faded author, there lies, in the narration of this adventure, the means of establishing myself once more with my readers: and the *Examiner* will be delighted to amuse the public at the expense of the noble duchess, cousin of the shop girl."

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But the noble duchess is not without her resources. Her grace, having bought up the debts of Bolingbroke, she is *his sole creditor* ! “and if the pleasant anecdote, with which he threatens her, appear in the morning journal, the evening paper shall announce that the witty author, Mr. St. John, is at that moment in Newgate ! engaged on a treatise upon the art of going in debt.” Here is tit for tat with a vengeance ! And worthy of observation is the vulgar coarseness of the threats, to say nothing of the improbabilities they involve. The buying up of debts upon the one hand, and the supposition, on the other, that the mere fact of there being a poor relation would overwhelm an English lady with ridicule ! But the plot waits. Masham, at this moment of the interview, rushes in, to tell Abigail (aside) that he has just killed an unknown gentleman in a duel, who had insulted him. This event turns out to be of the greatest importance to Bolingbroke, for the unfortunate defunct is his lordship’s cousin, whose fortune and title now devolve upon Mr. Henry St. John (so, speaking correctly, we ought to have called his lordship up to this point). This relation had behaved ill to his heir ; for he it was who first purchased up Mr. St. John’s debts, and then assigned them to his enemy, the duchess ; Bolingbroke does not, therefore, much regret the event ; yet still, it being his interest to feign sorrow, he craftily bethinks him of mournfully accusing the queen’s ministers with having contrived Lord Richard’s assassination, “because he was one of the opposition, and a defender of the people’s liberties.” A likely imputation ! The duchess, on the other hand, is now in the very thick of a busy intrigue against Abigail ; and in order to induce the queen to withdraw her interest in her favour, confers an obligation upon her majesty by procuring from the duke a captaincy for the young favourite, Masham, who has ingratiated himself with his royal mistress by reading for her every morning, the *Journal des Modes* ! ! Bolingbroke is by this time authorised to pursue the murderers of his cousin, when he learns from poor Abigail the name of the real author of

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his death. "What will you do?" asks Abigail, imploringly. To which Bolingbroke gaily replies, "Parbleu! I shall not do any thing. Some noise—some newspaper articles and speeches—until he (Masham) be out of the way. Then I will show myself, and pretend to pursue him with fury, such as becomes a cousin." And Abigail rewards the agreeable cool hypocrite, with the following naïve expression of admiration and gratitude: "Ah, you are so good! so amiable! 'tis well designed, wonderfully well. As he fled yesterday, he must already be far away." Masham, however, had not gone far away. He is overtaken on the road by an officer, who, so far from being charged to arrest him, presents the fugitive with a captaincy in the Guards, in a box bearing the identical diamonds purchased by the fair incognita in Tomwood's shop! and accompanied by an anonymous note, in a lady's hand, commanding his instant attendance at court. Abigail having heard all this, becomes straightway jealous: of whom she knows not, and dares not whisper her suspicions. But now, through the persevering Bolingbroke, the perplexed Miss Abigail finds herself already on a high road to the post of favourite; and the power of the duchess begins to wane. The moment at length arrives, which is to put the influence of all parties to the test. The passports of the French ambassador are ready; for in those days, according to M. Scribe, passports were as necessary in England as in France. Are they to be delivered to his excellency, and all accommodation broken off? or is he to be received at court, and peace proclaimed? Who is to win the prize, of war or peace? the Duchess of Marlborough, or Miss Abigail Tomwood? These are the momentous questions. The duchess has prepared a letter for the queen's signature: it is to be submitted at a certain hour. In the meantime, Bolingbroke rushes to the queen, and addresses to her majesty the most urgent remonstrances. They fail. But though to the politician the queen is deaf, to a calumny the

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ear of the woman is open. Bolingbroke hints that the proud duchess is carrying on an intrigue with Masham, and that her object in urging on the war, is to find employment for her husband abroad, that she may pursue at ease her guilty career at home. Whereupon the queen, having herself a *foiblesse* for this lucky young gentleman, exclaims: "I will never believe it."

Bolingbroke.—'Tis the truth, however! And this young officer, Arthur Masham, could, if he pleased, furnish your majesty with proofs sufficiently exact.

The Queen (with emotion).—Masham! What do you say?

Bolingbroke.—That he is beloved by the duchess.

The Queen (trembling).—He! Masham!

Bolingbroke (going).—He! or somebody else: what matter!

The Queen (with rage).—What matter, do you say? (*Starting from her seat.*) If I am abused! If I am deceived! If, under pretext of state interests private interests are advanced—No! no! all must be explained. Remain, my lord, remain. I will—I, the queen, must know all. (*She retires to the side gallery, looks out, and returns.*)

Bolingbroke (aside).—Can it be? the little Masham! O destinies of England, upon what do ye depend!

Queen Anne jealous of the Duchess of Marlborough upon account of little Masham!! But let us proceed:

The Duchess enters, advances proudly. Seeing Bolingbroke she stands stupefied and exclaims, "Bolingbroke!" and the latter bows. The Queen, endeavouring to conceal her anger, says coldly, "What do you want, milady?"

The Duchess.—Here are the passports of the Marquis de Torcy, and the letter which accompanies them.

The Queen.—Very well. (*She throws the papers on the table.*) I will read them.

The Duchess (aside).—O Ciel! (*aloud.*) Your majesty had, however, decided that it should be this very day.

The Queen.—Yes—but other considerations oblige me to postpone—

The Duchess (with rage, and looking at Bolingbroke).—It is not difficult to see to what influence your majesty yields at this moment.

The Queen (endeavouring to control herself).—What do you mean? What influence? I know of none—I yield but to the voice of reason, of justice, and of the public good.

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Bolingbroke.—We all know that.

The Queen.—The truth may for a time be hidden from me—but once it is known, once the interests of the state are in question, I hesitate no longer !

And so the queen proceeds in this declamatory strain, which is intended to be very satirical, her majesty having before turned a deaf ear to the very reasons she now urges. But as, by this time, the hour is come for the queen to go to chapel, Abigail enters *with her Bible and her gloves*, and observing the emotion of her royal mistress, the latter tells her there is a mystery which must be solved. She must see the person of whom they have been speaking, in order to interrogate him. And “Here he comes !” she cries, as Masham enters, and Abigail utters the usual exclamation of “*O Ciel !*”

We are now led to the famous glass of water scene, by the same labyrinth through which we have been treading, of mean motive and pretty intrigue, unredeemed by a fine thought, a happy expression, or a kindly characteristic of human feeling. At the queen’s salon in the evening, Masham is to meet the duchess. At the same time, and in the same place, he is to receive from his unknown protectress a signal, which shall at once point her out ; and convey, moreover, that she cannot that evening give him reception. The signal is to be a call for a glass of water. Bolingbroke has determined that the French ambassador shall be invited ; and as it is Lady Marlborough’s duty to address letters of invitation, he calls upon her to write him a note for the Marquis de Torcy. The duchess is astounded at his impudence, but Lord Bolingbroke once more sinks the nobleman, in the more formidable character of editor of the *Examiner*. He exhibits the anonymous billet addressed by a fair lady to Masham, with his commission in the Guards, and once more threatens a ludicrous *exposé*, in his mirth-moving journal. The duchess feels that appearances are against her : quite enough, at any rate, for a wit and a wicked public. But she does not give in without a struggle. As she once bought

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up his debts, she has now procured some letters of his wife's, addressed to Lord Evandale. "For value received, no doubt"—is the dry and delicate retort; and the shocked and frightened lady puts an end to the coarse combat, by writing the letter of invitation for the ambassador. In the latter's presence takes place the great scene. The queen is playing at backgammon with his excellency, when suddenly complaining of heat and oppression, she calls for "a glass of water." The duchess, who had herself previously learned the expected signal which was to discover the unknown inamorata of Masham, utters a cry of irrepressible astonishment; but on the instant recovering her self-possession, pretends that she was jealous of her right of serving her majesty being thus conferred upon another. The queen, with a sneer, commands her to perform the desired duty. The duchess obeys; but is either so troubled, or so angry, that, in the act of presenting the glass of water, she allows it to fall upon the queen's robe, and is at once dismissed before the whole court.

More secret history remains yet, to be revealed for ignorant posterity. The queen relents. And why? She has heard of the scandalous report in connexion with Lord Evandale; and as her own heart is upon the point of capitulation, she feels a sudden sympathy, and perhaps the want of a frail companion with whom to exchange some certain confidences. She resolves upon the recall of the duchess. Bolingbroke, alarmed, flies once more to the queen, and adroitly turns the suspicion from Lord Evandale to young Masham. The duchess's object, according to him, is to get back to the palace, only that she may be near Masham. An interview between the royal lover and the favourite succeeds, and they are nearly surprised in it by the sudden entry of the duchess: so nearly, that no place of concealment is at hand but the queen's bedroom. The duchess, peeping through a window, sees him, and the queen is in her power. But no! the devoted Abigail advances; takes upon herself the blame of having concealed her lover; and

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thus, to save the queen, compromises her own reputation. The queen, struck with gratitude, abandons her designs against "le petit Masham," and Abigail becomes the celebrated lady of that celebrated name.

In giving an outline of this popular comedy, we have not paused to correct such palpable misstatements of the real facts of history as those of Masham's relationship with Abigail, and the duchess's horror at the discovery of a kinswoman in the jeweller's daughter. It was for a Mr. Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham, that the duchess obtained the commission which gave such offence at the time; while the Duchess of Marlborough's complaint against Mrs. Masham was, that the latter had behaved to her with ingratitude, she being a poor relation whom the duchess had placed beside the queen. Such secondary facts merge in the odiously false colouring given to the whole reign and time. We are willing enough to allow a very wide licence to writers of fiction, when they take up incidents of history not clearly determined, or motives of character not positively ascertained. But M. Scribe transgresses all ordinary bounds, when he puts Queen Anne and the Viscount Bolingbroke in such agreeable relations as those of Prince Potemkin and Catherine of Russia. The character of Bolingbroke is ridiculously travestied. M. Scribe, led away by the previous success of "Bertrand and Raton," evidently tried his hand at a second Bertrand (a character said to have been drawn from Talleyrand), and on that cold and crafty prototype unwisely built his view of the fiery, accomplished, impatient, passionate St. John. The play of "Bertrand and Raton" was positively good. It contained excellent purpose, approached through well-sustained action, and enlivened by very happy language. The manner in which the minister Bertrand holds an *émeute* in leash, until, having achieved his object, he turns contemptuously round upon his poor cowering tool, presents a *chef d'œuvre* of skill. Not so the "Verre d'Eau." In its conception, it is vulgar, and, in its incidents, outrageously unnatural

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and absurd. It is a lie against history, as it is a lie against morals. The story of the window at Versailles may be true, for it is told by the Duc de St. Simon : but a man of exalted views could surely have drawn a wiser lesson from such an example of the caprices of reckless despotism : a lesson against bad monarchs, and the vile selfishness of such viziers as Louvois, not against all humanity. The window beginning the war, and the glass of water extinguishing it—after it had shed a blaze of glory upon England, and consumed the energies of France, and hung a cloud over the last days of her greatest king—presents one of those antitheses which dazzle a superficial mind, but from which a great one would turn as a mere littleness of speech. When M. Scribe endeavours to show that in a constitutional country like England, the caprice or fancy of a queen might produce effects as disastrous as the squabble about the window at Trianon, he at least sacrifices the moral derivable from the fact, that popular opinion in such a country includes within its control the highest as well as the humblest. It may be answered, that the first object of a dramatic writer is to amuse. True, perhaps, of a writer of vaudevilles. But when M. Scribe aspires to be the successor of Molière, he subjects himself to some higher obligations. Molière never sacrificed truth. He cared little, it may be, for the regular progress of a story : sometimes, as in “*L’Avare*,” winding up a series of delightful scenes by an improbable conjuncture of circumstances, as though, his purpose being accomplished, it concerned him little how he disposed of his personages. Having dressed up truth in the robes of satire, he might love, too, to place her in a whimsical frame, but it was one as rich and curious as the Gothic friezes. Your modern dramatists are mechanics, not artists ; cobblers, not creators ; wanting in imagination, and destitute of nice perceptions. How hearty, and kind, and natural, and generous is Molière, even in his occasional extravagance ! How coldly quick, how smartly pretty, how shallow in the fulness of pretension, is his successor ! But the

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age has always much to do with the creation of its oracles. Molière lived in an age of great men and brilliant deeds. Scribe lives in a time of commonplace actions and commonplace men. It has been justly said that it takes a good people to nourish a good and great man, and Scribe is the poet laureate of the Financiers of the Chaussée d'Antin. His "Verre d'Eau" had, therefore, much success. Its philosophy was up to the low current mark; its morality was appreciable by those whose best maxim is "take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves." Great effects from little causes—to be sure! who could doubt it? What great effects spring from the husbanding of centimes! What strokes of fortune depend upon a card, a turn of the dice, a fib at the Bourse! Then there was the depreciation of virtue, talent, character, which the man of money, who deals in money, and sways with money, is sure at last to feel. And, finally, there were cuts at the English, and small claptraps about the glory of France, suitable to the time and season. So the "Verre d'Eau" was and is enormously successful.

Naturally encouraged by this essay into the field of history and politics, M. Scribe has lately presented his "Fils de Cromwell." This comedy was not so warmly received. The subject was not at all suited to Scribe. He makes the son of Cromwell a sort of Timon. Take, for example, the following opening passage of a soliloquy of Richard, in the fifth act:

"Yes, I understand how those who govern mankind hold them in contempt. A few days' possession of power suffice to teach their value. They are worth so little, and sell themselves so dear. As to Monk, it is different. He is more frank, or has more address. He confessed all to me—'*a blind love of Lady Helen* induced him to take this part, &c.'"

The real character of Richard Cromwell, and the motives by which he was actuated, are left most happily undetermined for every purpose of the dramatist. Upon the French stage, where so much latitude is allowed to language, an author, anxious to

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make a person develop his own character by reasoning and the expression of his thoughts, rather than by external action, could, were he equal to such a task, have done much with Richard Cromwell. But M. Scribe is not the man for an analysis of inward action. Many have theorized about Richard Cromwell, no one has satisfactorily solved the problem of his conduct. Perhaps the solution lies in early religious impressions, acting upon a naturally amiable nature. Perhaps the inward agony of Cromwell, to say nothing of the more palpable terrors of his external failure, may have been revealed to the son, and taught him a terrible lesson. But this is not for comedy: certainly not for comedy as understood by M. Scribe. What shall we say, then, of the love motives and the love tale of Monk? M. Scribe turns history into a sad farce. His licences bring art itself into contempt. If any subject might thus be trifled with, fictitious writing would cease to be regarded as a medium of truth of any kind. Fiction should assume the cap and bells, and Imagination go out as a pantomime clown.

Let us descend into history more modern, guided by Frederic Soulié. The author of the "Devil's Memoirs" (*Mémoires du Diable*)—a book worthy of its hero for its hideous licentiousness—is assuredly not the best of historical guides. But as one of the collaborateurs of the *Journal des Débats*, M. Soulié's views of the English historical people are worth having, for the reason that, in the eyes of some of his countrymen, he who could so well paint the devil, ought to draw an Englishman or Englishwoman to perfection.

The scene of "Gaëtan, Il Mammone" lies at Naples, which city is threatened by the French, but protected by an English fleet under Lord Merton. Between the English admiral and the wife of the British ambassador, Lady Melton, there appears to be a perfect understanding; and she it is who by petticoat interference rules king, council, ambassador, and all. As at the close of the play, Lord Merton brings off his fleet in

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expectation of meeting Napoleon at the Nile, we may be allowed perhaps, with no great violence of conjecture, to take this circumstance in connection with the place, and the period, and the personages, and conclude that the author meant Lady Hamilton for the ambassador's wife, and Lord Nelson for the British admiral. M. Soulié might possibly say that he meant nothing of the kind, and that his satire is of a general character, for to be sure he represents *his* British admiral as a cold-hearted man, who has abandoned two children, the offspring of two betrayed women, and who are, in fact, Gaëtan and Leonora, the hero and heroine of the piece. It being very easy to penetrate the plots of such writers as M. Soulié through all the machinery of trap-doors and shallow surprises, we think we do not cheat our readers of any agreeable astonishment, by telling the main mystery at once. This Gaëtan is a second Masaniello, and his sister, whom he does not know to be such, and with whom he is in love, a second Corinne. "With the genius of a Sappho, and the courage of a Madame Roland," she sits in moonlight upon a ruined pillar, dressed in a white muslin tunic, and improvises for the benefit of moon-struck amateurs. This Leonora enjoys great influence with the republican and French party in Naples, and the admiral, who feels (see *The Critic*) some strange undefined interest about her, induces Lady Melton to include the Amazonian heroine among her guests at a fête she is about to give. While conversing with Lady Melton, the admiral calls his English servant Job, to take the letter of invitation to Leonora. On seeing her ladyship, Job becomes so troubled, that the letter falls from his hand, for he recognises, in Lady Melton, his old fellow-servant, Betty Stacke. Thus, here again is an instance of the world being governed by mean causes; for the quondam Betty *it is* who rules the ambassador, directs the affairs of Naples, manages the republican party, and, through Lord Merton, commands the British fleet. Is Betty worthy of her greatness? You shall see. Betty, upon seeing Job, whispers the Marquis Ruffo, who,

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in turn, whispers a bravo! But we had better let this choice morceau speak for itself.

Lord Merton.—Carry this letter to its address.

Job (muttering).—Ah! mon Dieu—mon Dieu—mon Dieu—'tis she—'tis she—'tis really herself—'tis Betty.

Lady Melton.—Grand Dieu! this man, Job—

Lord Merton.—What are you staring at, fool?

Job (letting the letter fall).—Milady—

Lord Merton.—Take up the letter and bring it to its address.

Lady Melton.—Ruffo—(she whispers him).

Job (going away).—Yes, milord—yes, milady—I dream—'tis not possible! Betty become milady—perhaps 'tis the climate of Naples.

Ruffo (whispers Stephen, while Job knocks at Leonora's door).—See'st thou this man? At any price, and before evening, he must be got rid of. Such is the order of milady.

Stephen.—Bah! I must (laying his hand upon a dagger).

Ruffo.—Yes.

Lady Melton.—Eh bien, my lord, do you not go to the council to announce how England sends her fleet to the defence of Naples.

Lord Merton.—Yes—yes, milady, I go.

Lady Melton.—And I ask leave to accompany you, milord, as the health of Lord Melton does not permit of his attendance. The Neapolitans must hear how the English are animated with the same spirit in defence of their cause.

Ruffo.—You hear that, brave Neapolitans?

The people.—Yes, yes.

Lord Merton.—Come milady, come.

Lady Melton.—Forget not, Ruffo!

Now the bravo Stephen turns out to be a man of some sense and reflection in the way of his calling. For, left alone with Job, he is puzzled to understand what can be the object of a great lady in ordering the assassination of such an idiot as he takes Job to be. So he accosts him. And then come these happy strokes of national character:

Stephen.—I salute you, signor.

Job.—I am very happy to meet you, who have the look of an honest man.

Stephen.—You do me too much honour. Do you like macaroni?

Job.—No! I prefer *bifteek*.

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Stephen.—Might not a glass of lemonade tempt you?

Job.—I like porter better.

Stephen.—Then I have nothing to offer you.

The conversation proceeds :

Stephen.—And so you know Lady Melton ?

Job.—Do I know her ! May be not ! When I was groom to the Duke of Newcastle, was she not lady's maid to the duchess ?

Stephen.—Lady Melton ?

Job.—That is to say Betty Stacke—and the duchess turned her off because the duke—(*whispers*)—and then she was put on board a ship of war one fine night, which left for—you know.

Stephen (aside).—Kill this fellow indeed ! not such a fool ! Oh no, I would rather preserve him in sugar like a confiture !

How the ship took a different course, and carried Betty Stacke to the height of dignity and power, has been already intimated. We may simply remark that the whole idea of this Englishwoman, with her glib messages of assassination, is highly worthy of the author of the *Mémoires du Diable*.

We should not attempt to take our readers through the whole bewildering plot of this egregious rubbish. It abounds, of course, with fighting, shooting, and murdering, and is sprinkled with such an abundance of ah's ! eh's ! oh's ! saluting each surprise, that had the printer thrown them in at random they could have hardly fallen, even haphazard, upon an inappropriate place. As for character, there is a total absence of it. Nor, indeed, is there the least necessary connexion between the conduct of the personages, and the incidents of the piece. Any body might have filled the place of Lord Merton. He is an English admiral, without one marked feature or characteristic : a singular evidence of the author's dulness in the appreciation of force of soul, or determination, or humour, or whim of manner. Lady Melton's orders for murder lead to nothing, not even to a self-exposure ; and Job, upon whose appearance so much threatens to turn, does no more than show a very red nose, which is supposed to be English, and

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run about in a sort of national quest after *bifteek* and porter. As Job introduces an English couplet, however, we may preserve the rarity :

Yes, my cry is a figue (fig) for fame,
Better is woman, wine, and game,
Gaming and drinking and loving,
Is the best manner of moving.

[*After the couplet he dances.*]

As a key to M. Soulié's "History" we offer the following short scene : the 5th of the 5th Act.

Ruffo.—Milord ! Here is an order of your ambassador.

Lord Merton (reading).—"Milord, immediately upon receipt of this, you will quit Naples for Malta, where you shall find the despatches which will inform you the destination of your fleet."

Lady Melton.—Without delay.

Lord Merton.—Ah, milady, 'tis you once more.

Lady Melton.—You deceive yourself, milord. 'Tis not I who have caused General Bonaparte to land in Egypt,

Lord Merton.—Bonaparte ? And am I destined to combat him ? Ah, fortune be thanked, 'tis an honour of which I will show myself worthy. Tell Lord Melton this order shall be executed instantly.

As for Lord Merton's children, the heroine, Leonora, is condemned to death as a rebel, but is rescued by a body of English sailors, who bear her off to an English ship. Her brother Gaëtan, about to follow, suddenly changes his mind and stays at home.

When we saw announced "Halifax," by Alexandre Dumas, here, we said, is Dumas smitten too, with the new Scribe fashion, and about to deal with Lord Halifax, as his master has dealt with Lord Bolingbroke. We were mistaken. This Halifax turned out to be a low, fighting, brawling ruffian, who kills or wounds a man *per diem*. It was at the Théâtre des Variétés, where vaudevilles alone are performed, that during the month of December last this comedy of Dumas' was presented, "*mélée de chant*," to bring it within the proper designation. The appearance of Alexandre Dumas, one of

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the leaders of the romantic school, in the humble walk of vaudeville, excited some curiosity among the literary public of Paris. Was it to be regarded as a specimen of the relaxation and bonhomie of a great man, attired in nightgown and pantoufles? or the vanity of a versatile genius, determined to conquer in every walk of literature, without leaving a nook untrodden? And the question took divers crowds to see it solved. Now heartily do we wish that Dumas had not intruded his foot within this smiling garden of the vaudeville. He who opened a melodrama with heaven, and the angels, and the virgin, and an ascending soul (let the doubters of so monstrous a tale refer to Don Juan de Marana), had no business with that genuine, sparkling, essentially French thing, the Vaudeville.

As no capital in Europe contains any class resembling the *grisette*, so is the vaudeville exclusively Parisian. How the dialogue, studded with song, runs on like a merry stream, broken every moment by apparent obstacles, which only serve to make it musical! The classic drama may pale before the romantic, and the romantic, after assuming a thousand extravagant shapes, may go down in brimstone and red and blue lights; but the vaudeville will mount up, light as a champagne bubble, coloured with the gay rays of wit and animal spirits, and immortal as France, its own sunny land. Oh! Scribe, why didst thou abandon so happy a realm, where thou wert supreme, to take to history and politics, and the legitimate five-act comedy forsooth, where thou art last among the great? Better dost thou think it, to serve at the feet of Molière's statue, than to reign in a paradise of repartee and chansonette? See how Dumas steals in and occupies the vacant ground! And how does he signalize his seizure of your charming little Marquesas? Why, by a fatal duel. Blood upon the boards of the Variétés!! Oh! come back, Scribe, and wash out the foul stains with a flood of repartee!

Dumas transferred his vaudeville to England, laying the

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scene at the period of Charles II. It opens with a tavern. The host is preparing to receive his guests. "Make haste! in a quarter of an hour our guests will be here. Prepare the tables, so that every thing be found in its proper place. Here, Thomas Dickson, a pot of ale and the *Holland Gazette*. Here John Burleigh and Charles Smith, a bottle of porter and a pack of cards. There for Seigneur Halifax, a bottle of claret and dice." The host is interrupted by news of the arrival of a young lady, who waits in expectation of the coming of a Rev. Mr. Simpson. She is unaccompanied, and is to leave in two hours. Lord Dudley next enters, in pursuit of the fair, and bribes the innkeeper to be allowed an already occupied chamber, adjoining that now held by the young lady. Dudley, in the meantime, seats himself at a table, when Halifax arrives, and, casting a contemptuous glance at the habitués of the tavern, walks up, in the custom which will at once be recognised as thoroughly English, straight to Lord Dudley, whom he has never seen before, and proposes to play at dice with him, as the only gentleman in company. Dudley accepts the offer. They play, and Halifax cheats. Lord Dudley accuses him of foul play, and Halifax replies by throwing the dice in his lordship's face, which outrage he follows up by a challenge to fight with pistols, in the very room where they are, and before the company assembled. They accordingly take their stand at the corners of the stage most remote, and advance in the present continental fashion. Lord Dudley's pistol misses fire, and then Halifax, who might have advanced and shot the nobleman, coolly invites his Lordship to a parley. "Monsieur," he begins, "my opinion is that the ball in this pistol is worth £200, and even at that price is not dear." Lord Dudley takes the hint, and at the proffered sum purchases his life, no doubt believing he had struck a good bargain. And here all difference might have ended, but for the young lady still waiting the Rev. Mr. Simpson, and into whose room Lord Dudley now intrudes himself. Her screams bring Halifax to her aid;

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Halifax, without more scruple, draws upon his lordship ; and the curtain falls to conceal the shedding of blood. So ends the first act, or, as it is called, the prologue ; a convenient name, by which the unities seem to be preserved, when any interval of time is supposed to elapse between the first act and the rest of the performance. In the next act we are introduced to a certain Sir John Dunbar, who is seeking to seduce a simple young girl named Jenny. She is repulsing his advances, at the moment when a letter is put into his hands, written by the late Lord Dudley when dying. In this highly characteristic letter, accompanied with Sir John's comments and reflexions, we have Halifax's true position and character, as well as an explanation of what the reader will discover to be a somewhat strange mission.

“ ‘MY DEAR DUNBAR,—In a duel without seconds, I have been mortally wounded by a fellow named Halifax, who ran me through the body with a sword, which he was not entitled to wear : as this man is in your service, I address myself to you, my best of friends, and call upon you to obtain vengeance from his Majesty. And now I die more tranquilly, in the hope that this fellow will receive the punishment he merits. I beg you, then, to have him hanged as soon as you lay your hands upon him. Such is the last request of your friend, DUDLEY.’ Dudley killed in a duel ! and by Halifax ! The rogue, then, pretends to play the gentleman, and is spending in taverns the money which I gave him to employ in the discovery of my lost daughter ! ”

It will appear rather strange, to any one expecting illustrations of human nature in the drama, that a father should employ an atrocious blackguard for the performance of so delicate a mission as that of seeking for a lost child ; but as Sir John detests his nephew, for no better reason than that the nephew is virtuous, perhaps it is not so strange that he should repose his confidence in Halifax. Well—this old reprobate, Sir John, finding that he has Halifax in his power, confides to him the nature of his passion for the poor girl Jenny ; and proposes, under fear of the gallows, that he shall marry her, in trust for his master. Halifax, villain as he is,

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recoils from the proposition. Sir John allows ten minutes' time for consideration. The time is employed by Halifax in inquiry concerning Jenny, whose affections, he rejoices to learn, are already devoted to some unknown. Halifax consents, therefore, to ask Jenny in marriage, calculating upon her refusal; but Jenny, to his horror, and the intended amusement of the spectator, accepts his proposal with unbounded delight; and their immediate marriage is commanded by the impatient Sir John. A scene soon afterwards takes place, which bids defiance even to the French probabilities. Halifax reproaches Jenny for her abandonment of the unknown, whom she had loved, for him. Jenny replies, that the unknown was Halifax himself; and she proceeds to call to mind that Halifax, during their childhood, had been her playfellow in the same village where they were both born, and which Halifax left six years ago. Yet after six years had he been utterly unable to recognise that faithful Jenny, who had never forgotten him; and who, at first sight, hailed him for her old friend. However, Halifax makes up for lost time, and, on the instant, talks like a fond and innocent swain. Jenny reminds him, that at his departure she accompanied him two leagues: "we quitted each other; I wept abundantly; and you, too, wept a little also."

Halifax.—And then I clambered up the mountain, waving to thee my handkerchief. Thou didst follow me from the valley. Arrived at the summit, at the spot where a sudden turning of the pathway was about to hide thee from my view, I looked back, for the last time; and approaching the extremity of the rock, I saw thee upon thy knees beneath, sending me a last adieu—a last kiss. Then I plucked a *marguerite* (daisy), and cast it to thee.

Very pretty this from a cheating, drinking, killing, abandoned scamp; and after so extraordinary a lapse of memory! But he now finds that he loves that Jenny passionately, whom he had completely forgotten: in fact, he had always passionately loved her: and, in proof, he resolves not to marry her,

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but to prefer being hanged. Heroic as may be his determination, however, sorry we are to confess that he does not support it heroically. Instead of boldly announcing it to Sir John, he merely tries to shuffle out of the dilemma in which his master has placed him: creating delays, and trusting to some lucky turn of fortune. Sir John orders the immediate solemnization of the marriage. "Oh!" says Halifax, "there must first be publication of the banns."

Sir John.—I have bought a dispensation.

Halifax.—Oh! much obliged—thank you, *Monseigneur*, but I am a Protestant, and Jenny is a Catholic.

Sir John.—Ah! thou art a Protestant.

Halifax.—*Mon Dieu!* yes. I am somewhat Protestant.

Sir John.—I always suspected as much. I always thought you were a Roundhead.

Halifax.—And I cannot abjure.

Sir John.—Oh! thou art too honest for that; so I found a way of settling the difficulty. *While at breakfast with the Archbishop of Canterbury*, I hinted to him his majesty's desire to see mixed marriages encouraged amongst his subjects, hoping thereby to bring about a blending of parties. *His lordship understood me, and I hold his authority signed with his hand and sealed with his seal (! !)*

More tricks and doublings follow upon the part of Halifax, but Sir John literally and metaphorically holds the noose about his neck. The marriage is inevitable, as well as the dishonour; when lo! Sir John discovers Jenny to be his own daughter. It was Jenny, too, whom Lord Dudley assailed; and it was in Jenny's cause that Halifax's sword was dyed with the unfortunate nobleman's blood. Thus every thing happily ends; the archbishop very likely, provided with his English majesty's dispensation for all the worthy gentleman's crimes, officiating at Mr. Halifax's nuptials. And this is a vaudeville, or, by the book, a comedy, mixed with couplets; and this is the lugubrious mirth, not to speak of the morality, of the romantic school. Oh! Alexandre Dumas.

The play entitled, "*La Main Droite et la Main Gauche*," although presented for the first time with in this present year, is,

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in fact, an alteration of a comedy whose appearance was interdicted by the French authorities about two years ago. The comedy so condemned by the dramatic censor, bore the quaint title, "Il était une fois un Roi et une Reine" (There was once upon a time a King and a Queen), and was supposed to convey a more marked allusion to the Queen of England, and her illustrious consort, than was consistent with propriety. An attempt was made to beget an interest in the author and his play, on this account, by an abundant use of the puff oblique. It was circulated in whispers, that Lord Granville having been consulted thereon, his excellency declined to interfere: that, in a proper English spirit, he threw back upon the authorities the care of their own public character, and that of their countrymen: upon their own heads should rest the responsibility of an unworthy attack upon a young married lady, exposed to observation and the shafts of dull malice, by her position as head of the greatest country in the world. In justice to Monsieur Leon Gozlan, we must acknowledge that he denied, in the public papers, the imputation of having sought to prop up his literary repute, by any speculation upon the prejudices excited at the time through political differences. But whatever may have been his intentions, certain it is, that repeated alterations and amendments failed, in the eyes of the censor, to remove a vice too thoroughly planted in the whole of the production. M. Gozlan was not only obliged to remodel his play, but to change the scene of action from England to Sweden. And notwithstanding a corresponding alteration of names in the *dramatis personæ*, we find retained such English designations as Major Palmer (and he is the chief character), as well as Drake and Donald; while in one part a gallant homage is paid to the charms of the daughters of the Emerald Isle. Were it not, however, that the Queen of Sweden's prime minister, like the Lord Bolingbroke of Scribe, owes his position to his dancing, as well as to other

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accomplishments deemed pleasing in the eyes of ladies, there could hardly be found a trace of personal allusion recognisable in this play, whose effect was supposed to have depended altogether upon portraitures, if not caricatures, of English political personages.

The Queen of Sweden, before her union with Prince Hermann, had been married by the *main gauche*, that is to say clandestinely, to Major Palmer, who was sometime afterwards conveyed away to the West Indies. Prince Hermann, too, had contracted left-handed matrimony with a German lady, Rodolphine. The one has a son, and the other a daughter, and as the Major returns, and Rodolphine takes up her abode in the neighbourhood of the palace, and as the son and daughter are unaware of their relationship to each other, the terms of which we do not undertake to settle according to the canons, there is an embroglio enough to occupy the utmost curiosity of the most eager unraveller of dramatic puzzles. Perhaps, however, as the story occurred since the very late period of Charles X., the truth thereof is easily ascertainable. The young gentleman, Master Prince Hermann, had saved Miss Princess Palmer's life, a foundation for love and gratitude familiar to most readers of romance; and she in return, when her lover gets into a scrape for which he is condemned to be hanged, commits perjury to save him, deliberately lisping one of those dainty sentimentalisms which any where but on the French stage would be deemed indecent, immoral, and blasphemous. "You risked your life, Monsieur Wilfrid, to save mine, and I for you have lost my soul." If this was in the English version, the author may have meant it as a satire on a certain Jennie Deans, who, in the Scotch sense of religion, is understood to have objected to imperil her soul, even to save a sister. The lady, however, instead of, like Juan in the pantomime, going to a certain ugly place before her time, finds a father, of whom, according to the description drawn by himself, she

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has no great reason to be proud; for he carries about him the portraits of three ladies whom he has betrayed—a book for learning how to play tricks at hazard, that is, to cheat—and to crown all, is an inveterate drunkard. This amiable and veteran roué is suddenly converted from his evil ways by the discovery of his daughter. He resolves to absolve the queen from his claims by the left hand, tearing with the other an act of abdication which, in her fright at his return, she had signed; while Rodolphine, contented with having through her exertions saved her son from the gallows, and witnessed his marriage with Miss Palmer, agrees to leave Prince Hermann equally undisturbed. And so to conclude, after the old fashion, “If *they* do not all live happy, may *we*!”

We have given the story of this drama, lest, by avoiding to do so, we might be suspected of shrinking from the revelation of a still lurking mystery. If the author did, as was once surmised, stitch a little newspaper gossip upon some trifle of scandal dropped Heaven knows how, or where, he has certainly untwisted it from his web. The play as it stands is as tiresome a production as it was ever our misfortune to have waded through. Had it even contained in its original shape any personal allusions, they must have been very coarse and clumsy, for the author is utterly devoid of inventive power, and quite incapable, we imagine, of embellishing a story, or giving it in any other form than that in which he found it. The most striking effort at stage effect attempted, is by means of a ding-dong bell, which the hero, Master Prince Palmer, hears, as a man is about to suffer innocently for the outrage by himself committed upon the person of Prince Hermann, and interprets its sound into an address of reproach to himself, as if the bell would say, “Coward, go hang!” But even this is not original, being stolen from a book which may probably exemplify the nature and extent of the author’s English reading, the story of

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Whittington and his Cat. In the language of the drama, there is at times a certain languishing prettiness, as if "writ on satin;" but, take it all in all, it is extremely feeble. We can afford to be well pleased that the lion's skin has been doffed, and that the long-eared animal who swelled in it so pompously, with the eyes of ministers and ambassadors fixed upon him, has been allowed to bray to his heart's content.

Among the writers of what we call political comedy, appears Madame Ancelot, and she alone to advantage. "*Les Deux Impératrices, ou une petite Guerre*" ("The Two Empresses; or, A Little War"), is an adoption of M. Scribe's principle of great effects and little causes, and may be joined to our English list by a long story therein of Queen Elizabeth, and one Edgar Walton, who loved her, and whose audacity she pardoned. The two empresses are Catherine of Russia and Maria Theresa; the "little war" is about a young Hungarian, painted in more romantic colours than little Masham; while the great effect flowing altogether from this love battle is no less than a treaty by which the troops of Catherine are prevented from marching to the dismemberment of Turkey and the subjugation of Poland. Madame Ancelot enters the lists with Monsieur Scribe. Her play is not so much an imitation as a piece of rivalry. The leading characters resemble those in the "*Verre d'Eau*," but the resemblance is more elevated in expression; and it was probably Madame Ancelot's ambition to suggest to her master a lesson in his own art. What in his hands is often hard outline, is often by her filled up with warm and genuine feeling. In place of Bolingbroke and his poor pretension to knowledge of nature, expressed in little frosted-sugar aphorisms, we have the copious *jeux d'esprit* of the Prince de Ligne. For Abigail Tomwood, we have Amélie de Rosay, a charming young French lady, in attendance upon Maria Theresa; while between Masham and the Hungarian we have indicated sufficient comparison. The scene is laid at Vissgrade, upon the frontiers of Hungary, where arrangements are made for an interview

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between the two empresses, at which are to be present the ambassadors of Frederick the Great and Louis XV. At this period, France, Prussia, and Austria, are disposed to force peace upon Catherine, whose ambitious prospects they are anxious to check ; and Catherine, who is well described as a mixture of the Parisienne and the Tartar, half-coquette, half-savage, has resolved upon adopting weapons of diplomacy very different from those commonly in use. Calculating upon the staid severity of her rival's deportment, she concludes, that if she can only get possession of a little scandal or a little weakness, Maria Theresa would, from dread of exposure, be placed at her mercy. The occasion offers itself quite apropos. A young Hungarian, the Count Wladimir, is smitten with a desperate love of the empress, whose footsteps he follows. At the opening of the comedy he has pushed his audacity so far, as to force his way to her carriage. In the confusion caused by such an occurrence he is allowed to escape, but orders are afterwards given for his arrest. The empress is alone, awaiting the arrival of Catherine, when the undaunted Wladimir pushes aside a secret door and enters. He pleads his disinterested love so touchingly, that the empress is moved to forgiveness. It is in this scene that the story of Queen Elizabeth and Edgar Walton is told : Maria Theresa citing English Bess as a worthy model of imitation for an Empress of Austria, and the Hungarian acting the English lover. As both are blending together so agreeably history and the tender passion, Catherine is announced. What is Wladimir to do ? Why, as queens must have secretaries, he coolly seats himself at a writing-desk ; just at the moment Catherine makes her appearance ; and a charming scene of female diplomacy follows. First, there is elaborate compliment ; and then, in a beautifully shaded gradation, ceremony softens into cordiality. " Let us forget we are queens," says the artful Catherine, " and chat like women." " Like sisters," rejoins Maria Theresa ; and she continues, rather sententiously, " Attacked from my childhood by

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numerous enemies, I had no resource left but the fidelity of my faithful Hungarians." Catherine utters an impatient "Oh!" adding, in the most insinuating tone, "She knows the life of the empress, the actions of the queen—what she now wants to learn are the thoughts of the woman." Maria Theresa cannot be made to comprehend. Still does she declaim about disastrous wars, and duty, and founding of churches and colleges, right nobly; and again Catherine interrupts her with a question now more explicit. What she wants to hear about are her royal sister's pleasures: of what nature are her affections, *intimes du cœur*. Still no answer: still the declamation goes on: until at last Catherine becomes nettled at the suspicion that her rival is indulging in a display of superior virtue, expressly for her mortification. Nevertheless she returns to the charge, shaping her questions so as to meet every case of love for a queen, and including among her examples one so like that of Wladimir, that he starts from his chair, and Maria Theresa utters an exclamation. Catherine, upon this, divines a secret, which she proceeds to hunt with the sagacity of a feminine half-savage. We shall not follow her through her skilful tracking of the young man, for whom she affects friendship; nor describe how it is she discovers what it is to humble Maria Theresa, and give the signal to her Cossacks to lay waste the Morea, and desolate gallant Poland. Meanwhile the able Prince de Ligne has pledged himself to outwit her majesty. This prince says things sometimes worthy of Rochefoucauld. "There is nothing, in his opinion, more dangerous than the simplicity of people of talent—it almost always covers some finesse." He, consequently, is not imposed upon by Catherine's affected bonhomie. A love-letter, at this crisis of affairs, is found by Prince Orloff, with which the latter, believing it to be addressed to Catherine, in a fit of jealousy reproaches her. Catherine joyfully seizes the letter, which she guesses to have been intended for Maria Theresa, and exhibits it to the whole court. The Prince de Ligne comes to the

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empress's aid. He protests that it was written at his dictation to one of the many "*Queens* of his soul" who reside at Versailles. But with difficulty does he preserve a grave face, as he reads aloud for the two empresses—the one laughing, the other confounded—the extravagant ravings of Wladimir. The pretended secretary, in the meantime, advances, snatches the letter, which Catherine has stretched out her hand to receive, and tears it. The Calmuck blood is up, and the Parisian graces dissolve like frostwork in the fury of the offended woman. Wladimir is secretly seized by Orloff, and his person held as a hostage for the signature of the desired treaty. And now womanly feeling assumes ascendancy over the sterner purposes of the hitherto unbending Maria Theresa. Catherine then mocks her in the toils, and plays and sports with her, and still probes her to the quick, with merciless insinuations that a young man who loves her should fall a victim thus: and the resolution of Maria Theresa grows faint. But the indefatigable Prince de Ligne has procured the escape of Wladimir—the secret door opens, unobserved by Catherine—a sign from Wladimir sets Maria Theresa at liberty to act—when, to the astonishment of Catherine, she renounces the modifications to which she had all but assented, and signs the treaty *tel qu'il est*, in company with the ambassadors of France and Prussia. The fate of Turkey is postponed; Poland breathes; Maria Theresa registers a vow against love; and Catherine ceases to be Tartar and resumes the Parisienne.

In this comedy of little causes, and they are very little, all is yet in a kindly spirit: real mirth and lively portraiture. We carry away no unworthy impression of Maria Theresa, with a half-fearful, half-humorous notion of Catherine. We see an able and polished courtier in the Prince de Ligne, whose correspondence was once the delight of all the eminent people of his time; and we make acquaintance with a charming French girl in Amelia. If we are to have nonsense about history, let us have it at least in an agreeable shape. Let

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it come from a clever woman like Madame Ancelot, and we shall be spared its nauseous dogmas and abominable attempts at philosophy.

Having thus briefly noticed some of the lately-represented French plays, which we conceive to be stamped with certain purposes and peculiarities, worthy of observation, we propose, still more briefly, to consider an inroad of the French drama upon the domain of general morals more serious than that which has been carried into the particular region of English history and character. And here again we shall take M. Scribe for our guide. The comedy called "*Une Chaîne*" is an evidence that the flagrant immorality of modern novels has begun to affect the classic atmosphere of the *Théâtre Français*. There is no worse symptom of a diseased public morality than a polluted drama, which, as old Doctor Johnson has it, living to please, must please to live. But it is still a disputed theory whether the literature of the time speak the feeling of the time. M. Saint Marc Girardin has examined the question. As a witness of domestic virtue coming within the sphere of his own observation, and fortified, it is to be presumed, by strong concurrent testimony, he, looking at the light literature of the day, so opposite in every sense to his own experience of what society is, decides directly in the negative. And, strange to say, M. Scribe himself, in the play before us, with an unconsciousness of the immoral tendency of his own production, puts the very question, and answers it in the same way. To a provincial merchant imbued with prejudice against the capital because of its vices, the hero thus addresses himself: "Our manners are more decorous than our writings; and if you remain some time longer among us, you will find that decency and *bon ton* are not yet quite banished from our salons; that there is virtue in families, domestic happiness in the world, and good fellows everywhere." We are inclined to accept this estimate of Parisian society taken by M. Scribe, not only

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because it accords with our own experience, but because its author is one of those acute-minded judges not apt to be swayed by prejudice, or misled by enthusiasm. But if the closet literature of the day be an unfaithful mirror, the stage must be held to give more truly "the body of the time." Shakspeare's adage, indeed, has itself been questioned latterly, because of a still unexplained phenomenon which presented itself at the period of the French Revolution. While the reign of terror brooded over the city, with the guillotine at full work, and spies everywhere ferreting out victims, Daphnis and Phillis, with the shepherd's pipe, and the pastoral ballad, held possession of the theatres. M. Villemain sees in it a consistent trait of the manners of the times ; a part of the same social lie, which mingled the jargon of humanity with deeds of ferocity. But those who are at all acquainted with the stage know well, how sedulously it obeys its routine habits and traditions. The stage but slowly adapts itself to sudden changes in society. Such changes must have assumed something of a permanent form before they tell upon the acted drama. The revolution, at the period spoken of, had not changed the habits and character of the people. A whole people's taste is not quickly altered ; and so the audiences, who flocked to the theatres, were still simply attracted by their old habitual enjoyments. As to the points we are about to notice in the modern French stage, our conclusion will not, perhaps, be uncharitably worded, if we express it thus : The modern plays acting upon the Boulevards, bespeak immorality certainly, but of the kind naturally engendered by a revolution, followed by years of military success. A generation, whose mind was nurtured upon tales of domestic horror, and of battles abroad, would naturally seek for entertainments highly wrought highly coloured, highly impassioned. It could have little taste for gentle exhibitions of domestic virtue. It could hardly have refined taste in any way. An Alexandre Dumas, or a Frédéric Melchior Soulié, would for a time please such a people ; and,

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doing so, would further debauch their taste. Stronger and coarser food would be sought, and even the ruffian Antony be thrust aside for Robert Macaire. This latter creation merits a word of notice here.

Robert Macaire is the name of the hero of a poor melodrama, entitled, "*L'Auberge des Adrets*." It was played, many years ago, at one of the Boulevard theatres, and revived at the Porte St. Martin after the revolution of 1830, when there was a rage for romantic melodramas; notwithstanding which, the Porte St. Martin public coldly received the revived play, and it was about to be withdrawn. The day following the first unfortunate representation, the principal actor, Frederic Lemaître, chanced to be walking along the Boulevards, when he was struck with the appearance and costume of a round, fat, shabby, half fashionable, and, although poverty stricken, most pompous individual, who, with the air of a gourmet examining the carte of Verey, selected from an open stall a slice of cake, for which he paid two sols, but paid them with a royal air. What a glorious rôle, thought Frederic Lemaître! and immediately the idea occurred to him to play the poor vulgar convict, Robert Macaire, as a comic part, moulded upon the dignified purchaser of the slice for two sols. The piece was repeated a second night; and when Robert Macaire, arriving at the Auberge des Adrets, questions the garçon as to the capabilities of his larder, concluding with the magnificent command to bring him a pennyworth of cheese, the house shouted with delight, and "Robert Macaire" became so much the rage of the day, as to supplant the "*Tartuffe*," in the designation of hypocrites. This Robert Macaire is a convict escaped from the Bagnes. He laughs at sensibility, and thinks remorse and regret excellent jokes. When about to commit murder, and unsuspectingly asked where he was going, he replies, with an air of sentimental pathos, that "he is about to stroll into the fields, to breathe the fresh air of the morning, and listen to the warbling of the birds." In fact, while his heart is of steel, and his

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conscience seared as with a hot iron, his face is radiant with mirth, his step elastic, his eye joyously working, his lip sneering, and his tongue dropping pleasantries, too oily to be caustic. He is Mephistopheles and Grimaldi. And all this the work of an actor—an actor, we say, of real genius—upon most dry and vulgar materials. The French public, accustomed to moody villains, and ranting villains, and even to cold and sneering villains, had never yet seen the devil incarnate, and they welcomed his appearance with rapture. People then exclaimed, “Oh, how profoundly immoral is the Parisian public!” As Miss Edgeworth’s Scotch steward so often repeats, “It may be doubted.” Robert was a parody and a reality: a parody upon the villains of Dumas, and a reality in his selfishness, his egotism, his subtlety, his hypocrisy, his superb manner, and his pretension to pastoral sensibility. Hence it is that the name, Robert Macaire, sticks to the modern rascal. He is Tartuffe no longer. For the depths of modern villainy, a greater villain was wanted; and why continue to stigmatise the sacerdotal form of hypocrisy, at a time when with influence the means of hypocrisy were gone? But there remained the hard usurer, the unscrupulous man of the world, who debauches and ruins, and gilds over the sepulchre. What name for him? Why Robert Macaire!

Successful novelty once more called forth imitators, and even Balzac essayed to rival the creation of Frederic Lemaitre. He produced “Vautrin.” In this rôle Frederic had several changes of dress, and in one he Macaired a high personage. The police interfered, and “Vautrin” was stopped, nor has “Robert Macaire” himself been since permitted to appear. There yet remains another phase of the feeling which called for that sort of entertainment whose history we are endeavouring to give, and that is the weariness succeeding excitement in all its moods. It cannot be called reaction. The time, it may be, is not yet arrived for that. It is the complete possession of the citadel by the enemy, and the silent acceptance of the

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subjugation, We come now to this; and we take “Une Chaîne” as a startling proof, that in this state of indifference the distinctions between moral right and wrong have already so far disappeared, as to confound the sharp observation of even such a man as M. Scribe.

The Chain which gives its title to the comedy, is the bond in which the hero of the piece is held by a married woman. Emmeric d’Albret is a young musical composer who—bred up in the provinces, and full of genius and love’s influence, the latter inspired by a fair cousin, the daughter of a wine merchant—comes to Paris to seek his fortune. He is in want of the aid of an author, who will undertake to adapt a libretto to his music; but not one of eminence can be induced to risk the required labour. One evening he finds himself in an elegant salon on the Faubourg St. Germain, to which his powers as a pianist have introduced him, and where he has the good fortune to attract the notice of the young and beautiful Countess de St. Geran, the idol of the fashionable world. He relates to her his difficulties about the libretto, when she immediately beckons to an author, who is none other, as the reader is given to understand, than M. Scribe himself, and who draws the following really modest outline of his own career. “He was a mere man of letters, who had learned to make by his pen an independence with which he was reproached! He had not, moreover, an appearance of genius, in an age when all the world lays claim to it; he had hardly talent; but good fortune, and chance, willed his continued success through twenty years.” From this author the lady commands an opera, in which he is to think more of the composer than of himself. He executes his task so well that the opera is crowned with success, and the young composer, by his music, wins his way to the heart of his patroness. But, alas! when the comedy opens, he is already weary of his chain, of which she who holds it cannot afford to undo one link, for attachment has grown to perfect fondness. Admiral St. Geran,

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the husband of the lady, is her senior by some twenty years, and, as the marriage was not one of love, he for a time treated her with coldness: a coldness which is made her excuse, and is by a French audience accepted as such, notwithstanding subsequent endeavours on the poor admiral's part, earnestly to atone for his former indifference. The admiral is a kind of French Sir Lucius O'Trigger, and the author, through the excellence of the French style of comic acting, has the pleasure to see his own idea verified; a thing which rarely occurs in the case of Sheridan's hero. With certain eccentricities not unbecoming a seaman, and a disposition to fight duels, the admiral is still a polished gentleman. According to his own account, he is "one of the *juste milieu*, a peer of France, and a married man, all in our time held equally ridiculous." In the management of this character Scribe displays more than his usual tact and dexterity, for while he is placed in the usually half-ludicrous position of a betrayed husband, blind to a disgrace which is clear to every one about him, he is yet kept respectable in the eyes of the audience. At this time the cousin Aline has arrived in Paris, accompanied by her father; and Emmeric seeks to break his chain, and marry his first love. It is Admiral St. Geran himself, who, ignorant of the attachment of the cousins for each other, and feeling a strong interest in Emmeric's welfare, thinks it would be well for a poor artist to obtain a wealthy young wife; whereupon, before he consults Emmeric, he betakes himself to win the consent of Aline's father, Monsieur Clerambeau. The latter refuses. But M. Scribe has a capital claptrap expedient in store. Three of M. Clerambeau's ships were once seized by the English, but Captain St. Geran rescued them and brought them safe into port, and surely after that a Bourdeaux merchant could not refuse him any request. He yields consent upon the strict condition that Emmeric will renounce any serious attachment for another woman, should such exist; and this consent and the accompanying condition, M. de St. Geran bears himself to

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Emmeric. The unsuspecting admiral, dissatisfied with the cold reception which his wife, as he supposes, gives Emmeric, begs she will receive him with more attention; and this passes so gravely, that no one thinks of sneering at the husband for a dupe, or at the lady for a hypocrite. Emmeric is led in and presented to Madame St. Geran; to "his Louisa," for whom he has just been to engage a box at the opera, where he is to sit beside her. They are left together: and then follows a scene of tenderness upon her part, falsely coloured with the charms of innocence, upon his of moody sullenness, for he has resolved to break the chain. He will not go to the opera that evening. But the threat of a rival levelled against himself is communicated to him; so not to seem afraid, he will go; but it will be for the last time. His confidant in this liaison is an attorney, who bears the heroic name of Hector. This Homeric child of romance has learned the before-named threat of insult, and while Emmeric is embarrassed as to his line of conduct, M. de St. Geran presents himself, and to him the attorney submits, under feigned names, a statement of this difficult process of love and honour. The admiral takes, of course, the spirited side of the question, and, bamboozled to his face by attorney Hector, is still, by the cleverness of the author, kept respectable in the eyes of the audience. The admiral decides that Emmeric ought not to accompany a lady with whom he is resolved to break; but as he ought to go to the opera, lest his rival should attribute his absence to fear, he must go with him (M. de St. Geran) and sit in his box. Thus is the unfortunate hero fixed in the very position from which he had essayed to escape. The day is now appointed for signing the contract of marriage, and the unhappy Louisa de St. Geran goes to the house, where the act is to take place. Her presence is regarded as a piece of gracious condescension suggested by her generous husband. Once more she is alone with Emmeric, and once more there is a scene of tenderness, with nothing to mark a suspicion of impurity. In the meantime a letter from the

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before-mentioned rival, addressed to Madame de St. Geran, falls into the hands of her husband, who calls him out and wounds him : but not until the conscience-stricken Emmeric has been thrown into a fever of unhappiness by St. Geran's message to attend him with pistols, which he mistakes for a challenge to himself. The countess, similarly mistaken, flies in search of Emmeric. She discovers him in his apartment, at the very moment that Aline, followed by her father, is upon the stairs. He urges her to take refuge in a cabinet. M. Clerambeau, whose mind is still haunted by the impression of some clandestine attachment, has his attention attracted to the cabinet, into which he is entering, when suddenly stopped. Opposition confirms him in his intention to discover the hidden secret, and he threatens, unless satisfied, to annul the contract. The admiral at this moment arrives, and again is made arbitrator of a difficulty in which he himself is unconsciously interested. He proposes to examine the cabinet himself ; but while the confounded Emmeric is seeking to parry this, Clerambeau rushes past him, and when he returns, declares that he has seen nobody. In that case, the marriage may at once take place, exclaims M. de St. Geran. But no, no. Some mysterious difficulty presents itself to M. Clerambeau, which the latter keeps honourably to himself. St. Geran and Emmeric retire, and Madame St. Geran is freed by Clerambeau. At the feet of the provincial wine-dealer this lady, young, beautiful, and accomplished, throws herself ; and her prayer is, not that he will not betray her, but that he will refuse his daughter to Emmeric in marriage, and so deprive Aline of her lover. But a deeper mortification awaits the unhappy woman. She is doomed to learn at last that her too favoured protégé hates her. The scales fall from her eyes, she withdraws her refusal to accompany her husband to Martinique, and the marriage between Emmeric and Aline is solemnized.

Brief as we have made this sketch, let us reduce it to a closer and more tangible point. The interest of the audience

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is fixed upon a married lady of rank, who chooses to commit adultery with a musician : generally speaking, by far the least mentally endowed of the artist class. Her crime is invested with the charms of a spontaneous, unreflecting, innocent affection ; so much so, that when the object upon whom it is fixed, already wearies of his chain, declares that he hates her, a murmur of indignation marks the direction of the spectators' sympathies. We speak from knowledge of the fact. Every one knows of this liaison except the husband, and all combine to keep him in ignorance ; but no one seems to dream that the slightest guilt marks the connexion, nor are they ashamed of the subordinate parts which they play in its encouragement. Nay, the good honest provincial merchant, who approaches the licentious capital with dread, readily bestows his daughter's hand upon the man who has deceived the good and gallant friend that had saved himself from ruin. In all this there is no indecency in the broad sense of the word, but there is much of that thorough indelicacy which is the sure attendant upon a dull moral sense. Does the presence of these in a play from the pen of the most popular of living dramatic writers, exhibited upon the boards of the most classic theatre, demonstrate a vice in the social state of society ? or do a careless people seek to be amused without reflecting upon the means, provided only they are novel ? Perhaps, after all, this latter question suggests the true solution. In either case, Scribe is as bad a teacher of morals as he is an unwise and unsafe illustrator of history. It will be said that he does not aspire to be either. If so, let him remove his enervating pictures of an ill drawn and worse imagined state of society from beside the rich comedy of Molière, whose joyous mirth, not over-nice neither, no more shocks the delicacy of those that witness it, than would, to use the illustration of Sterne, "the sprawlings of a naked infant." Let Scribe return to the Gymnase, now under the ban of the displeasure of the authors' society. Let him fix again in some new combination his never-changing personages. ' The old

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colonel of the empire ; the rich young widow ; the banker ; the gallant sea lieutenant ; and the half-sentimental heiress. In his hands these are "marionettes" to be shifted about at his pleasure : without character, colour, or physiognomy, it is true, but exciting curiosity by varying changes of position, and still appearing to talk from themselves, though it be but the author's voice which is heard in the one unchanged tone, cutting his jokes upon the passing occurrences of the day. In this light walk of the drama, M. Scribe could not do much harm. The amount that he ever did or might do, is accurately summed up by the writer of the "*Galerie des Contemporains illustres, par un homme de rien.*"*

"Having said that there is no poison in the pieces of M. Scribe, I do not mean to gainsay my assertion—no! They do not contain this strong poison which kills at once, but they are charged with that sort of sentimental opium which, distilled in petty doses, undermines strength, and disposes the heart to dangerous capitulations. While avoiding an air of over-rigid puritanism, I must say that we live in a state of moral apathy, in producing of which M. Scribe has had no share. Admitting his innocence in this respect, it must still be declared that he has pushed quite far enough his system of toleration in the affairs of the heart. Having already opened a thousand little charming channels, through which to slip from the true to the false—having created a thousand little delicate shades, which form so skilful a gradation, that the eye fails to separate black from white, good from evil—he must now advance further, and carry into the affairs of life a desolating doubt and unexhaustless raillery in place of his former playfulness, and its accommodating mode of compromise."

We apprehend that in "*Une Chaine*," presented since M. Scribe was hung up in the Authors' Gallery, the sentimental opium is more largely distilled, the shades of gradation more difficult to seize, the eye more confounded. M. Scribe has become more grave, and his gravity and poison are spread over five acts instead of two : in every respect changes for the worst.

* It is much to say, in praise of the writer under this signature, that in drawing the likeness of the Duke of Wellington for his gallery, he has painted that great man with a precision, impartiality, and justice, such as could hardly have been expected from a Frenchman writing under the influence of excited public opinion.

THE MYSTERIES OF PARIS.

By EUGÈNE SUE.

THE royal personages who figure in the Scott romances are among the most charming, if not real, of the characters which the delightful novelist has introduced to us. He was, if we mistake not, the first romantic author who dealt with kings and princes familiarly. Charles and Louis are made to laugh before us as unconcernedly as schoolboys; Richard takes his share of canary out of the cup of Friar Tuck; and the last words we hear from James are, that the cockaleeky is growing cold. What is it that pleases us in the contemplation of these royal people so employed? Why are we more amused with the notion of a king on the broad grin, than with the hilarity of a commoner? That mingling of grandeur and simplicity, that ticklish conjunction of awe and frivolity, are wonderfully agreeable to the reader; and we are all charmed to know how heroes appear in the eyes of their valets de chambre.

The drama, of course, was not slow to seize upon the means of popularity which the introduction of royal characters ensures; and as tragedy delighted in former days to describe the crimes and sorrows of the owners of thrones and sceptres, comedy and farce have made free with their eccentricities and foibles; and we have had on our own stage Charles XII. inducing Mr. Liston to marry, Frederick the Great presiding over a love intrigue, and a score of other great potentates employed in no more dignified way.

The French have carried this style of romance almost as far

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as possible, and have, especially of late years, introduced us to a number of queens regnant, visionary empresses, and grand duchesses of German states, involved in a number of comic love-intrigues, and treated just as familiarly as the simplest soubrette. Last winter, for instance, you might see two pieces of a night at the Palais Royal Theatre, in one of which the Empress Catherine was in love with a corporal of her guard, while in a second, a queen of Portugal was desperately amour-achée of an humble captain of dragoons. At the Comic Opera there was another queen of Portugal and another love-intrigue, in M. Scribe's piece of the "Diamans de la Couronne." At the Théâtre Français, in the same indefatigable writer's comedy of the "Verre d'Eau," her late Majesty Queen Anne (as our readers may more fully have observed in a former part of this Review) was laying bare the secrets of her heart in the same easy way; and at the Vaudeville, Mons. Arnal was just married to a reigning princess of Baden, and the audience were convulsed with laughter at the jocular perplexities of their serene highnesses.

Such a decided exhibition of the public taste was not likely to be lost upon a gentleman of M. Eugène Sue's extreme cleverness, and we owe to it, as we fancy, the chief character of the singular novel before us. "The public likes princes en deshabille. Let us give them one," says our novelist, "who shall be as striking as Haroun Alraschid; who shall be as majestic as Apollo, and as vulgar as a *commis-voyageur*; who shall lead us, in his august company, from the sublime to the familiar, and from the ridiculous to the terrible. Let us mingle together the highest and the lowest of mankind in a confusion so amazing, and find such virtues in vice, such vices in virtue, as never novel-reader or writer has yet had the sense to discover. We know our simple public, what its rank is, and what its amount of intelligence; it loves to indulge its appetite for wonder; it is as far removed from the society of princes and grandees, as it is from that of murderers and convicts; let us

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bring high and low together in a tale, and keep our readers in a perpetual delight of breathless terror.

“And as in the novels of our compeers, Soulié, Dumas, and the rest, the nation has been entertained with accounts of a particular vice, until really the descriptions of it interest no longer, and apologies for the infidelity of wives actually provoke yawns and ennui, in place of tears and sympathy; let us, in the intrigues which it may be necessary for our purpose to introduce into our narrative, take the virtuous side. Let all our heroines be modest, and only outraged so much as shall be necessary to provoke compassion for their fate. This at least has not been essayed in French romance since the new school was founded, and on this principle we may manage to excite the reader’s feelings, even while we are preaching the sternest virtue; and, while writing sentiments that would do honour to a saint, we may make a book quite as wicked as any reasonable novel-reader can desire.”

In a word, we believe “Mathilde,” and the romance before us, by the same ingenious author, to be quite as much works of calculation and trade, as any bale of French goods that is shipped for a foreign market, and has been prepared to suit the wants and catch the eyes of customers abroad: such for instance, as new fashions for the ladies, cases of claret and champagne for the planters, and a pretty assortment of glass beads, red cloth, and hatchets, for the savages with whom the merchant proposes to trade. Of all the literary merchants in France, M. Sue is unquestionably the most successful: he has kept the town with him for three years. While Soulié has been obliged to subside into the minor papers, while even Balzac has grown wearisome with his monotonous thrummings on the cracked old string, while Dumas has become common, and his fiftieth volume of “*Impressions de Voyage*” appears to impress nobody,—all the world is still eager to know the fate of M. Sue’s heroes and heroines, and the happy inventor of those personages is rewarded for his labours, it is said, at the rate of three francs a line.

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Three francs a line ! Think of that, ye poor scribes in England, who get but one thirtieth part of that same sum for the produce of your brains ! Every feuilleton of "Mathilde" in the *Débats* contains many hundred lines : these feuilletons appear many times in a week : how often, then, in a year ? Then there is the copyright afterwards ; so that every volume is a little fortune. Nor should this point have been mentioned at all, but that we are perfectly sure it is the main point with M. Sue ; who, so long as he receives three francs per line, will be pretty careless as to the rest, we take it ; and will not be deterred by any scruples of taste or conscience, or be induced to alter his course from any desire for reputation, or indeed for any consideration whatever, unless, of course, that of *four* francs per line.

He is, then, as we fancy, a quack, certainly ; but one of the cleverest quacks now quacking ; and a great deal more amusing than many dullards of his trade, who have a perfect belief in themselves, and outrage art, sense, and style, out of their confidence that their stupid exaggerations are the result of a vast imagination and an undoubted genius. Appearing as the work before us does, in almost daily chapters, in the *Débats* newspaper, the concluding sentence of each section is a mark of extreme ingenuity on the writer's part. No story-teller on the point of sending round his hat for contributions among the audience, ever stopped in his narrative more dexterously. One must hear what is to come at any cost : and so, with Monsieur Sue, the man who has read the *Débats* of Tuesday, must read the *Débats* of Wednesday. The heroine is just carried off and thrust gagged into a hackney-coach ; the hero is plunged into a vault, and the water has just risen up to his neck ; the monster is on the point of being punished for, or being triumphant in, his favourite crime. Read we must, and in spite of ourselves ; and the critic (for the truth must out, that critics are mortal), though compelled for conscience sake to abuse this book, is obliged honestly to confess that he has

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read every single word of it, and with the greatest interest, too. Here we are, in company with his Royal Highness the Grand Duke, assisting at the most magnificent assembly of the beau monde ; we accompany him in his disguise into the society of the most prodigious rascals ; we tremble for his royal highness's life, while at the same time we have the greatest confidence in his consummate valour and strength ; and, finally, though we know all this is sheer folly, bad taste, and monstrous improbability, yet we continue to read to the last page.

It is only then that the reader pauses to take breath ; and, considering over the subject which has amused him, mayhap feels rather ashamed of himself for having been so excited and employed. What right has a reasonable being to spend precious hours over this preposterous, improbable, impossible tale ? Did you not know, all the while you read, that every one of the characters in that book were absurd caricatures ? Do you not blush to have been interested by brutal tales of vice and blood ? All this the repentant reader acknowledges, and cries out " *Mea culpa* ; " but try him with a novel the next holiday, and see whether he will fall into the same error or not ? More philosophers than one would stop to see Punch, if they were sure nobody saw them : and there's many a philanthropist has seen a boxing match, from beginning to end.

With regard to the work before us, we find, after laying down the first volume of the six that have already appeared (how many more are to come, the author himself does not probably know), we find, we say, that we have been guilty of being interested in a history, of which, chapter by chapter, the following is an accurate summary :

I. After warning his readers, in a solemn preface, of the dreadful secrets which he is about to lay bare to them, our author at once introduces us to three of the chief personages of his history ; and the scene is in the dirty court of the house

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of a receiver of stolen goods, in which pleasant locality an appropriate incident occurs.

A poor young creature of seventeen, who, for the sweetness of her voice, is called *La Goualeuse*, or the Singer, and for the innocence and beauty of her looks, *Fleur de Marie*, flies into the court, from the pursuit of a white-haired, red-whiskered, red-eyed ruffian, known to his friends and at the galleys, where he passed fifteen years, under the terrible name of the *Chourineur*, the Stabber, or Knifer. The *chourineur* wants the *goualeuse* to treat him to drink ; but the latter refusing, the stabber rushes after her to beat her ; and has just seized her, and is about to put his threat into execution, when a young fellow steps opportunely forward, and puts himself before the *goualeuse*, in a boxing attitude. The two gentlemen proceed at once to fisticuffs.

The "milling match" is described with great accuracy and gusto. The brute strength of the stabber has no chance against the science of the stranger, who beats him most completely ; after which (for though the stabber was about to beat the poor young girl, and has committed a murder or two in his time, he is as good-natured and honest a kind of creature as ever lived), after which, quite delighted at the elegant manner in which his opponent has overcome him, the stabber gratefully accepts an invitation to supper with his conqueror, who likewise proposes the same repast to the *goualeuse*.

They go accordingly to supper at the house of *THE OGRESS*.

II. The *Ogress* is the landlady of a tavern in the *cit * ; which, though it has a *White Rabbit* for a sign, is no more called by that name, than the landlady is by her paternal one. The *White Rabbit* is called by the frequenters of the place, the "*Tapis Franc*," which cannot be translated into comprehensible English, but would be called, in slang language, the boozing ken.

Here several guests were assembled : viz.—

1, A young thief drinking brandy.

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2, Two murderers at supper.

3, A spy, who watches the two murderers, and presently goes out, leaving our friends to sit down to supper.

Being at supper (over a dish made of "fowls' giblets, pie-crust, fishes'-tails, cutlet-bones, cheese, vegetables, woodcocks'-heads, fry, savoy-cakes, and salad"—delectable repast!)—our three friends proceed to relate their histories.

III. The goualeuse begins. She is the daughter of she knows not whom. When a very little girl she fell into the hands of a dreadful woman, called the chouette: a cruel, hook-nosed, one-eyed woman, who, while she sold fried potatoes on the Pont-Neuf, employed her little protégée in the vending of barley-sugar in the same locality. If the goualeuse sold ten sous' worth of barley-sugar, she received on going home a crust of bread for her supper; if she could not dispose of goods to that amount, she received a beating and no supper. She oftener received the beating than the supper.

Tired of this tyranny (whereof we have no space to give the details), the goualeuse, who was a spirited little creature, one day actually ate up her commodity of barley-sugar before her mistress's eyes, and having that night been punished by that personage (the chouette *pulled out one of the goualeuse's teeth*, with a threat to continue the treatment daily), the goualeuse determined to run away.

She ran away. She was taken up as a vagrant, sent to a house of detention as having no friends or passport, confined at the house of detention until she was sixteen, when she was told to go and get her own living, and received a little capital of 300 francs, the produce of her labour while in the house.

This sum of money the young woman spent very carelessly, and having given away her last fifty francs to a poor woman in distress (who was afterwards murdered by her husband), the goualeuse had no other resource but shame, and became the creature of the ogress in whose house she lived. 'With all

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this, and although she had been accustomed to drinking, and although she had been educated in a prison, and although she earned her livelihood in the way indicated, perhaps the world never contained a more lovely, fascinating, delicate, sweet creature, than the goualeuse.

IV. It is now the turn of the knifer or chourineur to tell his story. He, too, was the son of mystery. His early days he spent in sleeping under the bridges and about the limekilns. He then became an assistant to the knackers, or horse-killers, at Montfauçon, and naturally of an ardent temperment, he speedily conquered his first repugnance to the killing of horses, and "knifed, and knifed, and knifed," until he delighted in blood. After his day's labour he used to feed on a horse-steak : not the steak of a horse killed by himself or his friends, for that kind of meat is sold to the restaurateurs, but of an animal that died a natural death. All his joy was knifing, and he grew so savage and ferocious that he became too violent even for the knackers, who ended by dismissing him.

He had but one resource—to go into the army. He did so : and might probably in better times have directed his knifing to some honourable purpose, but there was no war, and his heroism consequently took an unhealthy turn. One day his sergeant began to cane him, on which, seizing his knife, he knifed the sergeant : he knifed the privates : he knifed until he was finally overpowered, and, brought before a court-martial, was condemned to fifteen years at the galleys.

He passed the prescribed time at that nursery of morality. But though a murderer by taste, and though his education was even worse than that of the goualeuse, he retained always the highest principles of honour, and was in fact, as we have stated, the most generous and kind-hearted of men.

V. The young man who gave the knifer the beating, now tells his story. He is, says he, a fan-painter by trade ; but this is only his joking. He is, in fact, no other than His

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ROYAL HIGHNESS Gustavus Rodolph, Grand Duke of Gerolstein, residing at Paris, under the name of Count de Duren.

[Whilst he is talking re-enter spy, with Bow-street officers : spy points out the two murderers. Combat between murderers and police. Exeunt police and murderers, one of whom, refusing to walk, is carried to a hackney-coach.

They are no sooner gone but a lady and gentleman arrive. The lady has a hooked nose, a wicked face, and one green eye. "The gentleman was not above five feet two or three inches in height : his head, of an enormous size, was sunk between two large, high, powerful, fleshy shoulders, which were clearly seen under the folds of his blouse : his arms were long and muscular, his hands short, and covered with hair to the finger-tips : his legs were a little bent, but his enormous calves gave evidence of athletic strength. As for his face, nothing can be imagined more frightful than it was. It was scarred all over with deep, livid cicatrices. The corrosive action of vitriol had swelled his lips, the cartilages of his nose had been cut, of which two shapeless holes replaced the nostrils. His eyes, very bright, very little, very round, gleamed with ferocity ; his forehead, flattened like that of a tiger, disappeared under a cap of red fur, which looked like the mane of a monster."

This gentleman called at the galleys, the Maître d'Ecole (on account of his polite manners and learning), was in fact a person of very good birth, who, condemned to the Bagne for life, on account of a murder he had committed, had managed to escape, and in order to prevent all further recognition, had smeared his face with vitriol, and cut the cartilages of his nose. As for his lady, she was no other than the chouette, who recognised presently her poor goualeuse ; and the Maître d'Ecole taking a fancy to the young woman, orders her to come home with him instant.

She flies for rescue to her former preserver. The Maître d'Ecole puts himself at the door in a boxing attitude, and a

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serious combat is just going to ensue, when a man appears at the door over the shoulder of the Maître d'Ecole, and says (in English), "My lord Tom and Sarah are here."

Rodolph has only time to knock down the Maître d'Ecole and to disappear, when,

VI. Tom and Sarah arrive. Tom is Sir Thomas Seyton of Halsbury. Sarah, his sister, is the Countess Sarah Macgregor. In former days she had been privately married to Prince Rodolph, then only hereditary prince of Gerolstein; but the marriage had been annulled, and the daughter that they had had, had been carried off by Sarah, then lost, and supposed to be dead. Sarah comes to the boozing ken, disguised as a man. What does her ladyship want in such a place, and in such a costume? *She wants to know why Rodolph came to the tavern!*

VII. Going from the tavern (and serve them quite right) the countess and Tom Seyton of Halsbury are robbed in the street by the Maître d'Ecole and the chouette, who take from them their money and papers.

Will you gain some more money? asks Sarah with great presence of mind of the Maître d'Ecole. He naturally assents. Come then, says her ladyship, to a certain place, and I will tell you what you are to do.

The place is appointed, the parties separate, and—the knifer, who has heard every word of their conversation, jumps behind the countess's hackney-coach, and is determined to know their future proceedings.

VIII. Rodolph, resolved to rescue the goualeuse from her degrading position, pays her debts to the ogress, and takes her (after a slight interruption, IX.), in a hackney-coach (X.), to (XI.), a beautiful farm: where there is beautiful fruit, beautiful fields, beautiful poultry, beautiful cows, and where, to her indescribable joy, she is left with (XII.) Madame George. Be happy for a while, poor Fleur de Marie! put on a little pretty country costume (that we may be sure is the first thing thought

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of), milk the cows, feed the poultry, water the flowers, and learn your catechism from (XIV.) the excellent curate !

A chapter (XIII.) containing a conversation between Rodolph and his faithful attendant, Sir Walter Murph, we have omitted; as not having much to do with the story.

XV. The very next day Rodolph meets the Maître d'Ecole, on whom he has a design. He proposes to the Maître d'Ecole to rob a house. The Maître d'Ecole accedes to the proposal, but suspecting his comrade (and it must be confessed with some reason), vows not to lose sight of him till the deed is done. They go (XVI.) to a tavern in the neighbourhood of the house, an underground "cellar" in the Champs Elysées. Rodolph has managed meanwhile to make Sir Walter Murph aware of his project. The house, in fact, is Rodolph's own, and his proposal is to catch the schoolmaster there, and once in his power, to get from him the pocket-book stolen from the countess, and much further information.

XVII. The chouette goes to reconnoitre the house : all is so safe, that the Maître d'Ecole thinks he may have the robbing of the house for himself : and therefore knocks down Rodolph into

XVIII. A cellar full of rats and water, in which he is just on the point of drowning, when he is rescued by the knifer.

XIX. Rodolph is brought back to his own house, where he recovers after a severe illness.

XX. The knifer relates how he has seized upon the schoolmaster, after a dreadful combat : and how he discovers the plot against Rodolph.

XXI. RODOLPH PUTS THE SCHOOLMASTER'S EYES OUT !

In the two remaining chapters of the volume, the prince, in order to reward the faithful services of his friend, the knifer, imagines a reward for him, and accordingly purchases a butcher's shop, into which he inducts the chourineur : but after killing the first sheep in his slaughterhouse, the knifer flings down his knife—he will shed no more blood, he says : and the prince, applauding his determination, sends him out to a farm

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in Algeria, where his courage, energy, and honesty, can be far better employed.

As for the goualeuse, we need not tell any novel reader, that she is the long lost daughter of the prince and the Countess Sarah Macgregor: *that* must have been perceived by the commonest intelligence long ago.

There are five more volumes abounding in adventures: but of these it will scarcely be necessary to give a résumé. We are sometimes introduced to the very finest of fashionable life; then again we are carried into the porter's lodge of honest M. Pipelet, whose tribulations are related with a comic force, which Monsieur Paul de Kock himself could not surpass: we are taken to St. Lazare, the woman's prison of Paris: into the garret of the grisette: into the loft occupied by a starving family: and finally, we are presented to a scoundrel, more scoundrelly even than the Maître d'Ecole, a monster of iron, whom our rescuing, chastising angel of a Rodolph, no doubt, will overcome, ere the work is brought to a conclusion.

It will be seen, then, that contrast and action are the merits of this novel. It is a work indeed of no slight muscular force. Murder and innocence have each other by the throat incessantly, and are plunging, and shrieking, and writhing, through the numberless volumes. Now crime is throttling virtue, and now again virtue has the uppermost, and points her bright dagger at the heart of crime. It is that exciting contest between the white-robed angel of good and the black principle of evil, which, as children, we have seen awfully delineated in the galanty-show, under the personifications of the devil and the baker. And the subject *is* interesting, let us say what we will: if galanty-shows are now what they were some scores of years since, that is: still is it a stirring and exciting theme. Sometimes it is the devil who disappears conquered out of the shining disk, leaving the baker victorious: sometimes it is the baker, who is hurled vanquished into the universal blackness, leaving the

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fiend to shout his hideous song of triumph. Last Christmas, no doubt, many hundred children sat in dark drawing-rooms, and witnessed that allegorical combat, and clapped hands for the baker, their favourite: and looked wistfully at each other when the fight was over, and the whole room was awful and dark.

As with little unreflecting children, home for the holidays, in jackets and sugar-loaf buttons; so with those of whom the coat-tails have grown and the stature has extended to six feet, more or less. The old subjects interest them; the older they are, perhaps, the better; they do not care, in their leisure hours, to be called upon to think too much; their imaginations are, for the most part, of a very simple, unsophisticated sort; and that galanty-show amuses them more than many a better thing would. Depend upon it, a good play at Astley's, with plenty of fighting, riding, and the old clowns uttering the old jokes, interest them more than "Hamlet" ever did. It requires not only some trouble, but some brain too, to understand "Hamlet": any body can understand a combat of six, or Harlequin jumping through a clock-case. And provided the combat is well combated, people are not too squeamish about the dramatic propriety thereof. It lasted for ten minutes: it was fought to martial music: it concluded (why, who can tell?) with a grand blaze of blue and red lights, squibs, and catherine-wheels: and it will be performed (under a thousand different titles, and with more or less skill on the part of the squib and scene makers), every evening, till further notice—for hundreds and hundreds of years, no doubt: as long as men are to be amused by theatres, or by novels.

Our author is one of the very best of play or novel wrights that now exists in France or elsewhere; and if he is so clever as to see (one cannot help fancying so, at least) the outrageous folly of the subjects he chooses, and to laugh secretly at the public who applaud him, he yet knows his own interest a great deal too well to allow his audience to see that he despises them

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and his work, and carries it on with excellent mock-gravity, and an appearance of good faith. A man of his powers of mind *must* see that his book is bad and vulgar; that it contains sham incidents (so to speak), sham terror, sham morality; that it is a gross, destestable, raw-head-and-bloody-bones caricature, fit to frighten children with, unworthy of an artist; but what then? He gets half-a-crown a line for this bad stuff, and has, one may say with certainty, a hundred thousand readers every day. Many a man and author has sold himself for far less.

As for the plot, it is scarcely worth while to examine its construction, so absurdly and monstrously improbable is it. Do reigning princes of consummate virtue and genius indulge in freaks of this kind, and frequent thieves' boozing-kens, Do Scotch countesses put on men's clothes, and walk the streets so attired, without any reason? Would not a Scotch countess desiring secrecy be far less remarkable in her natural muff and tippet, than in a frock-coat and pantaloons? And would her ladyship plunge into a den of thieves, simply to know what somebody else was doing there? Would a clever thief, desirous to escape notice, disfigure his face so monstrously, that all the world must look at him for the monstrosity? And would he, by his preternatural hideousness, invite inquiry? Are murderers, after fifteen years of the galleys, commonly, sometimes, ever, exceeding good fellows at bottom? Are young women, after (if possible) still worse an ordeal of prison and crime, quite pure and angelic of heart? And so delicate-minded, that when restored to an honest and comfortable position, they actually pine away at the thoughts of the life which they formerly led? Such characters are quite too absurd to reason about, and such a plot passes all the bounds of possibility.

To give such a story a *moral* tendency, is quite as absurd as to invent it. We have no right to be interested with the virtues of ruffianism, or to be called upon to sympathise with innocent prostitution. A person who chooses to describe such

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characters, should make us heartily hate them at once, as Fielding did, whose indignation is the moral of his satire ; who does not waste his kindly feelings by weeping over worthlessness ; and who has been stigmatized as immoral in consequence. The hearty English satirist did not write for ladies, to be sure ; but his coarseness is not near so dangerous as the mock modesty of many another author, who makes rascals bearable by sweetening them and perfuming them, and instructing them how to behave in genteel company. The only good to be got out of the contemplation of crime is abhorrence ; and as the world is too squeamish to hear the whole truth (and the world is right, no doubt), it is a shame only to tell the palatable half of it. Pity for these rascals is surely much more indecent than disgust ; and the rendering them presentable for society, the very worst service a writer can do it.

But here, and we shall not probably grudge it to him, a French satirist has a certain advantage which, with our modest public, an English novelist cannot possess. The former is allowed to speak more freely than the latter ; and in consequence, perhaps the best parts of M. Sue's book are the most hideous, as where he describes the naked villainies of a certain monstrous notary who figures in the latter volumes. There can be no mistake about *him* : and the vigorous, terrible description of the man is wholesome, though bitter. There is a kind of approach to virtue in a good hearty negation of vice. It is best, no doubt, to contemplate only the good ; and not to be forced backwards, as it were, towards it, from a shrinking fright and abhorrence, occasioned by some dreadful exhibition of the opposite principle ; but at least let us have no mistake between the one and the other, and not be led to a guilty sympathy for villainy, by having it depicted to us as exceedingly specious, agreeable, generous, and virtuous at heart.

For instance, with our friend the knifer, if he had not been a dreadful murderer and rascal previously, we should never have got the friendship for him that subsequently ensues ; and had

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the goualeuse done her duty all her life as a spotless spinster, we should have no particular compassion for her ; and if this be true, it is their crimes which make us admire them ; that is (as we have nothing for it but to admit), it is their crimes we admire.

However, we must come back to the point from which we set out. In spite of all probability, and in spite of morality, and in spite of better judgment, here are six volumes that any novel reader who begins must read through. Although one knows the author to be a quack, one cannot deny that he is a clever fellow ; although the story is entirely absurd, yet it is extremely interesting ; and although it may run on for half-a-dozen more volumes, it is probable we shall read every one of them.

We subjoin an extract from the narrative, which may give an idea of its character and style.

THE TAPIS FRANC AND ITS INMATES.

" The tavern called the Lapin Blanc is situated near the middle of the Rue aux Fèves. It occupies the ground floor of a tall house, to which there is a public allée or entrance, vaulted and dark. Over the door of this passage hangs an oblong lantern, with a cracked glass, on which you read in red letters, ' Night Lodgings.'

" The chourineur, the stranger, and the goualeuse, entered into this tavern.

" It is a large, low room, with a smoky ceiling and black rafters ; lighted up with the lurid red light of a bad lamp. The whitewashed walls are covered with coarse designs, or sentences in the slang language of the Bagne. The floor is beaten and muddy, and a quantity of straw is placed by way of carpet before the comptoir, or bar of the ogress, which stands to the right of the door, and underneath the lamp,

" Along each side of the room there are six tables, nailed at one end to the wall, as are also the benches which accompany them. At the end is a door leading to the kitchen, and on the right of the comptoir, another door leading to the allée or passage which conducts to the places where sleep may be had at three sous per night.

" And now a word or two with regard to the ogress and her guests.

" The ogress's name is Mother Ponisse, and her calling is triple. She lets lodgings, she keeps the tavern, and she lets clothes to the miserable women who swarm in this filthy quarter.

" The ogress is about forty years old : a large, robust, high-coloured, corpulent woman, and bearded somewhat on the chin. Her hoarse,

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manly voice, her great arms, and heavy hands, give indications of no common strength ; over her cap she wears an old red and yellow handkerchief ; her old shawl crosses over her breast, and is tied at her back in a knot ; and under the green woollen gown which she wears, you see a couple of black sabots, a good deal burned by the chaufferette on which she places her feet. Her face is copper-coloured, and inflamed by the constant use of strong liquors.

"Her comptoir is covered with a plate of lead, on which stand several wooden measures bound with iron, and some vessels of pewter ; and on a shelf behind her stand several glass bottles, cast so as to represent the figure of Napoleon. These bottles contain some horrible compound liquors of green or rose colour, and going under the names of 'consolation' and 'parfait amour.'

"To conclude, a great black cat, with yellow eyes, is couched by the ogress's side, and seems the familiar demon of the place.

"By a contrast so strange, that it would appear impossible, did not one know what an impenetrable mystery the human mind is ; a twig of 'buis de paques'(branches of box blessed at Easter in Catholic countries), and bought at church by the ogress, was placed behind her, in the case of an old cuckoo-clock.

"Two men of repulsive countenance, unshaven, and dressed almost in rags, sat at one of the tables, and scarcely touched the broc of wine served to them ; but were speaking together in a low, agitated tone of voice.

"One of them, especially, was extremely pale and livid, and was continually pulling down over his face a sort of skull-cap he wore. He kept his left hand almost always hid, and disguised it as much as possible when called upon to use it.

"Further on sat a lad of scarcely sixteen, with a beardless, hollow, worn, livid face, and lustreless eyes. His long black hair fell round his neck ; and the lad, a type of precocious villainy, was smoking a short pipe. With his back against the wall, his two hands in the pockets of his blouse, his legs stretched along the bench, he never quitted his pipe but to drink from a small can of brandy placed at his side.

"The other frequenters of the Tapis Franc offered nothing remarkable. Their faces were either brutalized or ferocious, their gaiety gross and licentious, their silence stupid or sombre.

"Such was the company assembled in the Tapis Franc at the moment when the stranger, the chourineur, and the goualeuse entered.

"These three personages hold too important places in our history, and the figures of each were too remarkable, to allow us to pass them over.

"The chourineur was a tall and athletic man, with hair exceedingly fair—almost white ; thick eyebrows, and enormous whiskers of a bright red.

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" Misery, exposure to cold and sun, the rude labours of the galleys have bronzed his complexion to that sombre tint which is, one can almost say, peculiar to the convict.

" In spite of his terrible surname, the features of this man rather express brutal boldness than ferocity ; although the back part of his head, very strongly developed, announces the predominance of the brutal and sensual appetites.

" The chourineur wears an old blue blouse, and trousers of coarse velvet, once green, but now scarcely to be distinguished from the coat of mud which covers them.

" By a strange anomaly, the features of the goualeuse are of that candid and angelical type which preserves its ideality even in the midst of depravity ; as if the vices of the creature were unable to efface from the countenance that noble imprint of beauty, which, on some privileged beings, the Creator has bestowed.

" The goualeuse was sixteen years and a half old.

" The whitest and purest forehead in the world, surmounted a face of a perfect oval ; a fringe of lashes so long that they curled a little, half veiled her large blue eyes. The down of first youth velveted her round and rosy cheek. The contour of her little purple mouth, of her straight, fine nose, and of her dimpled chin, was of admirable beauty. On each side of her smooth temples fell a plait of the finest blond hair, which descended to the middle of her cheek, and then passing under her little ear, of which one could perceive the lobe of rosed ivory, disappeared under the folds of a large blue handkerchief of cotton stuff, tied over her forehead. (This description, it must be confessed, fails wofully in the English version ; but the phrases in French are by no means so affected or outrageous as they appear in our language to be.)

" A coral necklace surrounded a neck of the most dazzling whiteness. Her robe of brown stuff—a great deal too large—allowed one to perceive how fine her waist was ; as supple and round as a cane. A poor little orange shawl, with a green fringe, was crossed over her bosom.

" The charm of the goualeuse's voice had struck her unknown defender. In fact, this voice was so sweet, harmonious, and thrilling, that it had an extraordinary effect upon the society of knaves and abandoned women among whom this poor girl lived ; and they often asked her to sing, and listened to her with delight, and had surnamed her the Goualeuse, the Songstress. . . .

" The defender of the goualeuse (and we shall name the stranger Rodolph) appeared to be thirty at the most. His light and active figure, of a middle size and perfect proportion, did not seem to announce, at first sight, the prodigious strength which he had displayed in his combat with the athletic chourineur.

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"It would have been difficult to assign any precise character to Rodolph's physiognomy, which united in itself the strangest contrasts.

"His features were regularly beautiful, perhaps too beautiful for a man.

"His pale and delicate complexion, his large brown eyes, almost always half shut, and with a dark rim of azure round the lids, his careless carriage, vacant and ironical smile, seemed to indicate a man, if not blasé, at least with a constitution worn out or enfeebled by the early vices of an opulent life.

"And yet that white and delicate hand had just overthrown a brigand, one of the strongest and most terrible even in this quarter of brigands.

"Certain lines in Rodolph's forehead marked the profound thinker, the essentially contemplative man: and yet there was a firmness about the contour of the mouth, and a bold and imperious carriage of the head, which showed the man of action: whose daring and physical force always exercise an irresistible ascendancy on the crowd.

"Sometimes his features bore the impress of a sad melancholy, when an expression of the sweetest and gentlest pity would appear in his face. At other moments, on the contrary, his look became severe, nay, wicked, and his features expressed so much disdain and cruelty, that you would not have supposed him capable of a gentle thought. The close of this history will show what were the circumstances or ideas that excited in his mind feelings so opposite.

"In his contest with the chourineur, Rodolph had exhibited neither anger nor hate. His adversary was unworthy of him, and confiding in his force, agility, and address, he had only shown contemptuous raillery for the species of brute-beast whom he had overcome.

"To complete the portrait of Rodolph we must say that his hair was of a light chestnut, of the same shade as were his nobly arched eyebrows, and his fine and silky moustache; his chin, which protruded somewhat, was carefully shaved.

"The language and manner of these people, which he knew how to assume with incredible ease, allowed him to pass quite unsuspected among them. As they entered the tavern, the chourineur placed his great hairy hand on Rodolph's shoulder, and said,

"'Make way, boys, for my master. Yes, here is the master of the chourineur; it is only just now that he thrashed me; so, gentlemen, if any of you want a beating or a broken head, here is your man! I will back him against anybody, yes, against the *maitre d'école* himself, who would find his master, lads, as I've just done.'

"At this speech the ogress, and every one of the guests in the *Tapis Franc*, turned their eyes towards the conqueror of the chourineur, and examined him with respectful awe; some busily drew back their pots

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and glasses to the end of the tables at which they were sitting, in order to make room for Rodolph, should he propose to place himself by them. Others went to the chourineur, and asked him in a low tone of voice some particulars of the life of the unknown individual who had just made so brilliant a début in society.

"Even the ogress greeted Rodolph with one of her sweetest smiles; and with a monstrous and fabulous politeness, a politeness never before heard of in the annals of the Lapin Blanc, she actually rose from her place at the bar, and advancing towards Rodolph, respectfully asked him what he and his friends would please to take? This was an attention she never paid to the maître d'école himself, that redoubtable villain, who even made the chourineur tremble.

"One of the two ill-featured men whom we have mentioned (the pale man who hid his left hand and always pulled his skull-cap over his eyes) now leaned over to the ogress, who was carefully wiping Rodolph's table, and said in a hoarse voice,

" 'Has the schoolmaster been here to-day?'

" 'No,' said Mother Ponisse.

" 'Was he here yesterday?'

" 'Yes, he came yesterday.'

" 'With his new wife?'

" 'What do you mean by all this cross-questioning,' said the ogress: 'do you think I'm a spy, and will split on my customers?'

" 'I've business with him.'

" 'Business! A pretty business it is, a set of cut-throats as you are.'

" 'You live by cut-throats,' answered the bandit, surlily.

" 'Will you hold your tongue?' cried the ogress, coming forward with a menacing air, and lifting the wooden measure which she held in her hand.

"The man went back grumbling to his place. The goualeuse, as she came in with the chourineur, had given a friendly nod to the lad who was smoking: 'You're always at the brandy, Barbillon,' said the knifer.

" 'I'd rather go without victuals and shoes,' said the lad, 'than without my brandy and my backy,' and he discharged a great puff of the latter as he spoke.

* * * * *

"The entrance of a stranger interrupted all conversation, and caused all heads to look up. He was a robust, active, middle-aged man, in cap and jacket, perfectly au fait in all the customs of the place, and employing the familiar slang language when he asked the hostess for refreshment.

"Although he was not one of the frequenters of the Tapis Franc, the

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people there speedily took no notice of him: he was *known*: for, to know their comrades, rogues like honest men have no difficulty.

"The man took his place so as to observe the two ill-favoured men, one of whom had asked for the schoolmaster. He kept his eye fixed upon them: but from the position they could not see that they were the objects of his attention: from time to time he looked at a paper which he had in his cap.

(The company now subsides into quiet, and the goualeuse, the chourineur, and Rodolph, recount their histories.)

"The man now got up, and recommending the ogress to have an eye upon his wine, went out for a moment, returning presently with an energetic looking individual, of tall and athletic stature.

"'Come in Borel,' said the man, 'and let us have a glass of wine.'

"The chourineur turned round to Rodolph, and whispered to him in a low voice, 'Look out for squalls; that man's a spy.'

The moment the two bandits (one of whom was the fellow in the skull-cap who had so often asked for the schoolmaster) saw the stranger, they looked at each other, jumped up, and made for the door; but the two police agents threw themselves upon the men, uttering at the same time a particular cry.

"A terrible struggle took place.

"The door of the tavern was flung open, more agents rushed into the room, and the muskets of the gendarmes were seen glittering in the passage without. The man in the skull-cap screamed and shouted with rage: half stretched on a table, he writhed and plunged so frantically that three men could scarce hold him. Quite cowed and beaten down, with pale, livid face and lips, and a hanging, trembling, lower jaw, his companion made not the least resistance, but held out his hands for the agents to manacle. The ogress seated at her counter, and used to such scenes, remained quite calmly looking on, with her hands in the pockets of her apron.

"'What have the chaps been doing, M. Borel,' said she to that personage, whom she appeared to know.

"'They murdered an old woman, yesterday, in the Rue St. Christophe, in order to rob her lodgings. Before dying, the old woman said she had bitten one of the men in the hand: we suspected these two rascals, and my comrade came just now to see if they were our men. They're caught, and that's all.'

"'It's lucky I made 'em pay the wine,' said the ogress. 'Won't you take a drop of something, M. Borel; just one glass of Parfaitamour?'

"'Thank you, no, Mother Ponisse; I must first finish my job with these chaps here—ha! there's one of 'em kicking again.'

"It was the skull-cap man, who was still furiously struggling; and

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when the agents wished to take him to the hackney coach in waiting in the streets, it became necessary to carry him. His comrade, trembling nervously in every limb, could scarcely stand: his lips were violet, and moved as if they wished to speak. This inert mass was likewise flung into the carriage.

"Before quitting the Tapis Franc, the agent looked round attentively at the various guests, and perceiving the chourineur, said to him in a tone that was almost affectionate,

"'You there, you rogue? how comes it that we hear no more of you? no more fighting or quarrelling, eh? You're growing quite quiet.'

"'As quiet as a lamb, M. Borel; and for the matter of that, you know I never begin.'

"'What business would such a great monster as you have to begin? With your strength, there's no one could stand up against you.'

"'Here's one that can, and beat me too,' said the chourineur, laying his hand on Rodolph's shoulder.

"'Who are you? I don't know you,' said the agent, looking at Rodolph: 'I don't know you.'

"'And never shall, my lad,' answered he.

"'Well, I hope not, for your sake: and so good-night, Mother Ponisse. Your house is a regular trap; here's the third murderer I've taken in it.'

"And I hope it won't be the last, and my service to you, Monsieur Borel,' said the ogress, smiling graciously on the agent as he departed. 'Didn't you know the chap in the skull-cap,' said the lad before-mentioned: 'I did at once; it's Velu; and directly the beaks came in, says I, I'm sure there's something wrong; for I saw Velu always kept his hand under the table.'

"'It's lucky for the schoolmaster that he wasn't here,' said the ogress: 'the skull-cap man asked for him twice, and said they had business together. It's lucky for him: and that I'm an honest woman too, and don't sell my customers. Come here and take 'em; that's all very well, but I never will peach. Well! speak of the devil—here is the schoolmaster with his wife.'

"A sort of thrill of terror ran through the assembly at the entrance of this redoubtable brigand; and even Rodolph himself, in spite of his natural intrepidity, felt some emotion as he examined him.

(The maître d'école, and his companion, the chouette, are described: the former casts his eyes upon the goualeuse, and bids her come round to his table.)

"'Don't you hear me?' said the monster, coming forward. 'If you don't come this minute, I'll have one of your eyes out like the chouette's here: and you chap with the moustache (to Rodolph), unless you hand her over, I'll do for you.'

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"'Mon Dieu! mon Dieu!' cried the poor goualeuse, clasping her hands, 'O defend me!' and then reflecting she might be bringing Rodolph into danger, she added, 'No, no, don't move, Monsieur Rodolph; if he stirs, I'll cry out; and for fear of the police, I'm sure the ogress will take my part.'

"'Don't be alarmed, my child,' replied Rodolph, looking boldly at the maître d'école: 'you are at my side, and shall not leave it; and as that hideous beast yonder sickens you, as well as myself, it will be best for both of us that I put him into the street.'

"'You do it?' said the schoolmaster.

"'I'll do it,' said Rodolph, and he got up, in spite of the entreaties of the goualeuse.

"The schoolmaster could not help stepping back, as he looked at the terrible aspect which Rodolph's face now wore.

"Fleur de Marie and the chourineur were similarly struck by it: a look of diabolical rage and wickedness now suddenly contracted the noble features of their companion. They could no longer recognise him. In his combat with the chourineur he had been calm and disdainful; but in facing the schoolmaster he seemed possessed with a ferocious rage, and his wide staring eyes shone with a strange wild lustre.

"The looks of some men have an irresistible magnetic power. Certain celebrated duellists, it is said, owe their horrid successes to this fatal fascination of look, which demoralizes and prostrates their enemy.

"Rodolph possessed this frightful piercing glance, from which those on whom it is once cast, endeavour to escape in vain. It terrifies and masters them; they feel it almost physically; and, in spite of themselves, they must seek it—they cannot withdraw their own eyes from it.

"The schoolmaster trembled, went back yet another step, and feeling himself no longer safe, even with his prodigious strength, searched in his blouse for his dagger. A murder would have probably stained the Tapis Franc, but the chouette, suddenly jumping up, seizes the schoolmaster by the hand, and cries 'Stop, stop, Fourline,* you shall have them both presently, but stop and let us speak.'

(The chouette has recognised the goualeuse, and tells her history, and that she has papers regarding the goualeuse, which show who the parents of the girl are.)

"Forgetting the maître d'école, Rodolph listened attentively to the chouette, whose story interested him; and the schoolmaster, meanwhile, now that his antagonist's eyes were off him, felt his courage restored; for he would not believe that the slightly-made individual

* Fourline is the diminutive of Fourloureux; an assassin, in the language of the galleys.

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before him was in a condition to resist the herculean strength which he himself possessed. So coming up to the champion of the goualeuse, he said to the chouette, in a tone of authority,

" 'Enough talk, chouette; I'll just spoil this young fellow's beauty for him, and then my pretty blonde here will find that I am the handsomer of the two.' "

" Rodolph jumped over the table with one bound.

" 'Mind my plates,' screamed the ogress.

" And the schoolmaster put himself into an attitude of defence: his hands before him, his body a little back: balanced on his robust reins, and, as it were, arched and supported on one of his enormous legs, which was as firm as a balustrade of stone.

" Rodolph was just going to attack him, when the door of the tavern was flung open, and a man in the garb of a charbonnier,* almost six feet in height, ran into the room, pushed the schoolmaster aside, and coming up to Rodolph, whispered to him, in English, 'My lord, Tom and Sarah are at the end of the street.'

" At these mysterious words, Rodolph, with an angry air, flung down a louis upon the ogress's counter, and ran towards the door.

" The schoolmaster tried to stop the passage of Rodolph; but the latter, turning rapidly round, dealt him two such blows in his face, that the monster staggered, and fell back stunned on the tables.

" 'Bravo!' cried the chourineur. 'That's the very trick with which he finished me.'

" The schoolmaster coming to himself after a few seconds, rushed out into the street after his adversary; but he and his comrade had disappeared in the sombre labyrinths of the city—it was impossible to rejoin them."

And had we space, we would have given some of the grotesque scenes in the volumes; and the chapter in which the hero inflicts condign punishment on the schoolmaster, by putting out the eyes of that malefactor. By way of encouraging the romance reader, it may be stated in conclusion, that the *Débats* has just commenced a new series of this interminable story, in which horrors more horrible, scoundrels more profound, thieves, knaves and murderers, still more thievish, knavish and murderous, than any to whom we have yet been introduced, are made to figure on the scene.

* The charbonnier is Sir Walter Murph, the squire of H.R.H. the the Grand Duke of Gérolstein.

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It is hard to follow the progress of French novelists nowadays. Their fecundity is so prodigious, that it is almost impossible to take any count of the number of their progeny ; and a Review which professes to keep its readers *au courant* of French light literature, should be published, not once a quarter, but more than once a day. The parliamentary debates with us are said to be a great and growing evil ; and a man during the session, and with private business of his own, has no small difficulty in keeping up with his age, and in reading his newspaper from end to end. Public speakers in France are not so verbose generally ; or, at any rate, French parliamentary reporters are not so desperately accurate. But, on the other hand, the French reader must undergo a course of study infinitely more various, and more severe too in the end, though in the easy department of fiction. Thus with us, when you are once at the conclusion of the debates in the *Times*, you are not called upon to peruse the same orations in the *Post* or the *Advertiser* : which each luckily contains precisely the same matter. But since the invention of the *Feuilleton* in France, every journal has its six columns of particular and especial report. M. Eugène Sue is still guillotining and murdering and intriguing in the *Débats* (for the “*Mystères de Paris*,” of which we noticed five volumes six months since, have swollen into ten by this time) ; M. Dumas has his tale in the *Siècle* ; Madame Gay is pouring out her eloquence daily in the *Presse* ; M. Reybaud is endeavouring, with the adventures of Jean

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Mouton in the *National*, to equal the popularity which he obtained with "Jérôme Paturot:" in a word, every newspaper has its different tale, and besides, the libraries do not seem more slack than usual with their private ventures. M. de Balzac has happily subsided for the moment, and is at St. Petersburg; Madame Sand is, however, at her twelfth volume of "Consuelo;" and the indefatigable M. Soulié is everywhere. He publishes circulating libraries at once.

A part of this astonishing luxury of composition on the part of the famous authors, is accounted for, however, in the following way. The public demand upon them is so immense, that the authors, great as their talents may be, are not able to supply it, and are compelled to take other less famous writers into their pay. And as the famous wine merchants at Frankfort who purchased the Johannisberg vintage of 1811, have been selling it ever since, by simply mixing a very little of the wine of that famous year with an immense quantity of more modern liquor; so do these great writers employ smaller scribes, whose works they amend and prepare for press. Soulié and Dumas can thus give the Soulié or Dumas flavour to any article of tolerable strength in itself; and so prepared, it is sent into the world with the Soulié or Dumas seal and signature, and eagerly bought and swallowed by the public as genuine. The retailers are quite aware of the mixture, of which indeed the authors make no secret; but if the public must have Johannisberg of 1811 and no other, of course the dealers will supply it, and hence the vast quantity of the article in the market. Have we not seen in the same way how, to meet the demands of devotion, the relics of the saints have multiplied themselves; how Shakspeare's mulberry-tree has been cut down in whole forests, and planed and carved by regiments of turners and upholsterers; and how, in the plains of Waterloo, crosses, eagles, and grapeshot are still endlessly growing?

We are not sufficient connoisseurs in Soulié to say whether the novel before us is of the real original produce, or whether it

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has simply been flavoured, like the Johannisberger *achtzehnhundertelfter* before mentioned. "The Bananier" may be entirely original; or, like many of Rubens's originals, a work of a pupil with a few touches of the master. The story is cleverly put together, the style is very like the real Soulié; and seeing the author's signature, of course we are bound to credit. The tale has been manufactured, we take it, not merely for a literary, but also for a political purpose. There is a colonial-slavery party in France; and the book before us is written to show the beauties of slavery in the French colonies, and the infernal intrigues of the English there and in the Spanish islands, in order to overthrow the present excellent state of things. The subjects are two fine themes for a romantic writer. To paint negro slavery as a happy condition of being; to invent fictions for the purpose of inculcating hatred and ill-will; are noble tasks for the man of genius. We heartily compliment Monsieur Soulié upon his appearance as a writer of political fiction.

The amiable plot of the piece is briefly this. A young Frenchman, with the most absurd romantic ideas of abolition and the horrors of slavery, goes to Guadaloupe, to see his father's correspondent, a planter there, and perhaps to marry his daughter. The planter has an English nephew who aspires to the hand of the lady, and likewise has a special mission from his government to procure abolition. For this end he has instruction to hesitate at no means. He has orders to poison the negroes, to burn the planters' houses, to murder the planters, and to foment a general insurrection and massacre. Let us not say a word of the author of repute who would condescend to write such a pretty fiction as this; but rather wonder at the admirable impartiality and good taste of a people to whom such a tale could be supposed to be written. Unfortunately, the fictions of the romancers are not greater than the fictions of the grave politicians of the French public press. What a noble characteristic of a nation, is this savage credulity and hatred! What a calm sense of magnanimous superiority

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does this mad envy indicate ! What a keen, creditable appreciation of character is this, which persists in seeing guile in the noblest actions, and cannot understand generosity but as a cover for some monstrous and base design ! Well, well, we must hope that years will dissipate this little amiable and charitable error of the most civilized, and therefore the most humane and just, people of the world. It is in their compassionate interest for the entire human race, whom they were formed by nature to protect, that they dread us perfidious shopkeepers of England : an error of people whose love makes them only too perspicacious, *soliciti plena timoris amor*—an error of the heart, and on the right side. Some day or other the great nation will perhaps relent. She will say, “I am the guardian of humanity, as all the world knows perfectly well. All the oppressed are looking up to me : night and day they have their eyes turned towards me, and are invoking, as that of a Providence, the sacred name of La France ! I am the Good Principle of the Earth : you are the Evil. I say so. Victor Hugo says so. M. de Lamartine, and all the French newspapers, say so. I may have been wrong for once : it is just possible, and I give you the benefit of the doubt. You did not emancipate your negroes out of hatred to the French colonies. It was not in order to set Guadaloupe and Bourbon by the ears that you spent twenty millions—*cinq cents millions de francs !* You are a nation of shopkeepers, and know the value of money better. Go. You are forgiven this time. I am the Providence of the World !” Let us look forward in calm hope to that day of rehabilitation ; and meanwhile, leaving the general question, return to Monsieur Soulié and his novel.

Our author lands his hero in Guadaloupe, and the day after his arrival he proceeds, in a kind of incognito, to visit his correspondent, the rich planter. On his journey to that gentleman’s house (his faithful servant Jean accompanying him), they meet a negro, who, in an argument with Jean, shows the latter that the negro slave is a thousand times

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happier than a free Norman servant, who, after all, is only free to choose what master he likes. They proceed to the coffee-grounds and M. Sanson's estate, and there they find the negroes in such a state of absurd happiness, indolence, and plenty, that Jean is determined he will black and sell himself at once, and resign the privileges of an illusory and most uncomfortable freedom. Luckily, this manly argument for slavery has been debated and settled in Europe some five hundred years, and it is not probable that M. Soulié would have his countrymen turn slaves again; but he means, we take it, to establish the point, that our compassion is greatly thrown away upon a set of idle good-for-nothing blacks, who are quite unfit for liberty, and, in fact, greatly happier than they deserve to be.

M. Clémenceau, the young Frenchman, will not believe in these signs of prosperity; he will have it that the blacks are wretched, that they are only ordered to be happy for that day under pain of flogging, and that there is some tremendous plot against him. He is, in fact, extremely peevish, and absurdly suspicious; and because he cannot, or will not, understand them, ready to calumniate all the world. Is it possible that a young French philanthropist should ever be in such a state? and if one, is it possible that a whole nation should have such prejudices? Perhaps. But we are getting again on *the general question*. The Frenchman is installed in the planter's house, where, received with kindness, he is ready to mistrust and to bully everybody (one cannot, do what one will, but think of the general question), and here at length we have him in presence of the Englishman. The scene is a dinner party, and the two rivals begin quarrelling "as to the manner born."

"' And what Parisian novelties have you brought us?' said Madame de Cambasse.

"' My father has begged me to offer some little presents on his part to Mademoiselle Sanson, and as soon as my baggage is brought on shore, I hope M. Sanson will permit me to present them to Mademoiselle.

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"'I accept for her with a great deal of pleasure,' said Monsieur Sanson.

"'And I am sure that these presents will be in the best possible taste,' said Monsieur Welmoth, 'if Monsieur Clémenceau has selected them.'

"The sneer was evident, but Ernest did not choose to take personal notice of it, and replied,

"'There is no great merit in choosing in our country; for elegance, grace, and good taste, as Monsieur says, are to be found in every thing which is done there.'

"'It is certain that you are the kings of the mode,' said Welmoth, still sneering.

"'As you are the kings of commerce,' replied Ernest, with the most impertinent politeness.

"Jean at this made a grimace. He thought his master was not holding his own, as the phrase is. Mr. Welmoth was of the same opinion, for he continued in a pompous tone,

"'The kings of commerce! No frivolous empire that, I think.'

"'Certainly not; but it is an empire of circumstance which a thousand events may destroy; whereas that which is inherent in the talent, the tact, the good taste of a nation, to use your expression, sir, remains eternal. You may continue for a long time yet to be kings of the coal-mine and the railroad: but we shall be always kings of the fine arts, of literature, of every thing which elevates the soul and aggrandizes the dignity of humanity.'

"'You speak of literature, Monsieur Clémenceau: you have never read Sir Walter Scott.'

"'I know him by heart, sir. However ignorant Frenchmen may be, they have not that narrow spirit of nationality which prevents them from seeing the merit of their rivals. Almost all of you know French, gentlemen; but you don't know a word of our literature. In fact you have the same spirit in everything—you know the mechanism, but you know not the work.'

"'And are they worth reading, your French books?' said Welmoth.

"'You will be able to judge when you have read them.'

"Ernest pronounces these words in such a calm tone of disdain that Monsieur Welmoth blushed red, and Madame de Cambasse turning to Clémenceau, said, 'Have you brought many new books?'

"'A whole cargo,' said Clémenceau, laughing.

"At this moment Jean in waiting upon Clara committed some little awkwardness.

"'He!' said Edward with an arrogant air. 'Monsieur le domestique Français, mademoiselle has her own people to wait upon her.'

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“ ‘Pardon me, mademoiselle,’ said Ernest, ‘but the French domestics are like their masters, and are in the habit of being polite to every one.’ ”

‘The two young men looked each other in the face, the two grooms exchanged hostile glances—war was declared, and the positions already taken up.’ ”

This little bit of comedy is curious and laughable, not on account of the two illustrious antagonists and their “grooms,” whom M. Soulié has brought to wait at table, but on account of the worthy author himself, who exhibits here no unfair specimen of the scribes of his nation. From the *National*, upwards or downwards, the animus is the same; in great public journals, and here, as we see, in humble little novels, directly L'Angleterre is brought into question La France begins to bristle up and look big, and prepare to *écraser* the enemy. They will have us enemies, for all we can do. Apropos of a public matter, a treaty of commerce, or a visit to dinner, war is declared. Honest Monsieur Soulié cannot in a novel bring a Frenchman and his servant in presence of an Englishman and his groom (the latter, by the way, is described as being dressed in a livery of *yellow and crimson*, an extremely neat and becoming costume), but as soon as the two couples are together they begin to hate each other. Jean, the French servant, dresses himself in his most *fiçelé* manner, in order to compete with his antagonist in the crimson and yellow; and similarly recommends his master to *put on his best clothes*, so as to overcome his British adversary. “When Clémenceau was left alone,” our author says, “he comprehended that the *gros bon sens* of Jean had advised him better than all his own personal reflections, and he took particular care *à faire ressortir tous les avantages de sa personne*.” The imagination can supply the particulars of that important toilet. Is it not a noble and magnanimous precaution?—a proof of conscious dignity and easy self-respect? The hero to be sure is an imaginary one: but who but a Frenchman would have thought of preparing a hero to overcome an enemy by the splendour of his

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clothes, the tightness of his waist, the manner in which his hair was curled, and the glossy varnish of his boots? Our author calls this uneasy vanity *gros bon sens*. Thus, before he has an interview with the Europeans, Quashimaboo's wives recommend him to put another ring in his nose, and another touch of ochre over his cheeks, in order that the chief may appear more majestic in the eyes of the white men. There is something simple, almost touching, in the nature of the precautions, and in the naïveté which speaks of them as *gros bon sens*.

When our author brings his personages together, the simple artifices with which he excites our respect or hatred for them are not less curious. He takes care even that the politeness of the "groom" should be contrasted. Crimson and yellow remains behind his master's chair after the fashion of his insolent country, while the Frenchman is made to be polite to everybody as Frenchmen always are. What a touch that is of "*He ! Monsieur le domestique Français*, Mademoiselle has her own people to wait upon her." How like in all respects to the conduct of an English gentleman in a strange house, to attack other people's "grooms" for bad behaviour at table, and to call them Messieurs les domestiques. The servants might make what mistakes they chose ; the whole table might be upset ; the sauce-boat might burst in shivers upon the lap of the Briton ; and in a strange house ; and such is the indomitable pride of those islanders, that *impavidum ferient ruinæ*.

As English reviewers we are not going to take a side with Mr. Welmoth against M. Clémenceau and the author, but would only point out humbly and good-naturedly such errors as we conceive the latter commits. Thus the speech put into the mouth of M. Clémenceau, that though Englishmen are almost all acquainted with the French language, they do not know a word about its literature ; and the hint that the French, though they do *not* know our language, *do* know our literature, having no narrow spirit of nationality which prevents them from seeing the merit of their rivals—this speech may be considered as a

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general observation, applicable to the two countries, rather than to the story ; and might have taken a place in the "Memoirs of the Devil," or in the "Four Sisters," or in the "General Confession," or in the "Château des Pyrénées," or in any work of M. Soulié. It is a proposition that may be asserted apropos of any thing.

But is it a fair one and altogether unopen to cavil ? It stands thus. The English do know French, but don't know French literature. The French don't know English, but do know English literature. We are the mechanics, we know the wheels but not the work ; they are the great spirits, which know the work, but do not care for the petty details of the wheels. Victor Hugo has enunciated in his book upon the Rhine an opinion exactly similar to that of Soulié : viz., that France is the great intellect and light of the world, and that, in fact, all the nations in Europe would be fools without her.

Let us concede that pre-eminence. A nation which can understand a language without knowing it, has advantages that other European people do not possess. She *is* the intellectual queen of Europe, and deserves to be placed at its head. There is no coming up to her : we don't start with the same chances of winning. But surely it should not be argued that our knowing the French language operates against us as an actual disadvantage in becoming acquainted with French literature. *We* have no other way of getting at it. We are not master-spirits ; we can no more read books without knowing the words, than make houses without setting up the bricks. Do not turn us away and discourage us in our study of the words. Some day or other we may get to comprehend the literature of this brilliant France, and read the "Memoirs of the Devil."

This is all we humbly pray for. The superiority of France we take for granted. But if in an *English* book we were to come across such an argument and dialogue as the above to a Frenchman, "We in England do not know your language, but

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can perfectly appreciate your literature ; whereas, though I admit you are acquainted with English, yet your natives are much too great fools to understand it"—we should say that the English author was a bigoted, vain coxcomb, and would expose as in duty bound, his dulness, monstrous arrogance, ignorance, and folly,

After giving the above satisfactory specimen of the *élégance*, the *grâce*, and the *bon goût* of his country, M. Soulié prepares to cure his hero of his generous error regarding slavery : and if the romancer's epilogues have any moral to them, as no doubt they are intended to have, we should argue from his story, not only that slavery is not an evil, but actually a blessing and a laudable institution. We will not say that this is the opinion in France, but we will say that in that sentimental and civilized country the slave-question has been always treated with the most marked indifference, the slave sufferings have been heard with scepticism. Is it that the French are not far enough advanced and educated to the feelings of freedom yet, to see the shame and the crime of slavery ? or, rather, that they are inspired by such an insane jealousy of this country, as to hate every measure in which it takes the lead ? When the younger Dupin said in the Chamber that the abolition of slavery by England was "an immense mystification," and spoke what was not unacceptable to the public, too—he satirized his own country far more severely than the country he wished to abuse. A man who sees his neighbour generous, and instantly attributes a base motive to his generosity, exposes his own manners more than his neighbour's. A people living by the side of ours, who can take no count of the spirit of Christian feeling in England, of the manly love of liberty, which is part of our private and public morals, shows itself to be very ignorant and very mean, too, and as poorly endowed with the spirit of Christianity, as with that of freedom. There was not a meeting-house in England where sober, quiet, and humble folk congregated, but the shame and crime of slavery was soberly felt and

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passionately denounced. It was not only the statesmen and the powerful that Wilberforce and Clarkson won over; but the women and children took a part, and a very great and noble one, too, in the abolition of that odious crime from our legislation. It was the noblest and greatest movement that ever a people made—the purest, and the least selfish: and if we speak about it here, and upon such an occasion as this trumpery novel gives us, it is because this periodical, from its character, is likely to fall into some French and many foreign hands; and because, such is the persevering rage of falsehood with which this calumny is still advocated by a major part of the French press, that an English writer, however humble, should never allow the lie to pass without marking his castigation of it, and without exposing it wherever he meets it.

Our novelist, with the ardent imagination of those of his trade, goes however to prove a great deal more than is required of him: and gives such a delightful picture of the happiness of French negroes, that poor Jacques Bonhomme might cry out to be made a slave at once, if, by sacrificing his rights at present, he could be inducted into such a charming state of dependence. The hero of the story finds that the slaves only work *six hours in a week*, for which they are well fed and clothed; they have the rest of their time to themselves; they earn as much money as to satisfy their utmost avarice for indolence, their love of dress, or of liquor. They would not be free if they could; and one meritorious slave, who is introduced especially, a new importation from Africa, exhibits the greatest alarm lest he should be sent back to his native country. It was because led by such writers as these, that in the imperial times, the French fancied their domination was received as a welcome gift over Europe. The *Moniteur* contains a hundred such statements regarding Spain. As for the German Rhineland, we have seen how the French believe to this moment it is theirs in heart and soul. But let us give the secret of the English abolition as it is laid down here for French instruction. M. Soulié has the whole

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thread of the intrigue, and it was probably furnished to him by the statesmen who ordered him to popularize their doctrines by means of this tale.

The hero makes the acquaintance of an Irish superintendent of the plantations, who by means of *des relations qu'il a conservées en Angleterre* has the secret unveiled to him. "I am," says Mr. Owen, "an Englishman, if, that is to say, an Irishman has a right to that title—if, born in a part of Great Britain which is subject to the most insolent, the most ferocious, and the most contemptuous tyranny, I can recognise as my countrymen those who treat my compatriots with more rigour and more disdain than the most insolent master uses towards his black slaves. And yet, in spite of my just griefs against the English, I have some hesitation in accusing them before you."

This is only a French novel to be sure, but it lies, as much as the gravest newspaper in the anti-English interest. The only point one would remark in the above statement is the hint that some slave-masters *do* treat their slaves insolently and tyrannically—the admission takes off from the beauty of the picture of that paradise, a French colony. And now Mr. Owen unveils the secret of secrets.

" 'You know, sir, at what price England purchased the emancipation of her colonies?'

"Ernest was about to break out into enthusiastic praises of this sublime act of philanthropy, but he had not the time, for Monsieur Owen continued as follows :

" 'You are too well aware of the real interests of France not to be aware that England did not begin by completing with her own hands the imminent ruin of her colonies, except that she might arrive through these at the ruin of the French and Spanish colonies, the prosperity of which is injurious to her.

" 'You are not, I suppose, about to give credit to the regular organizers of famines in India for such a magnificent love of the black race, as to induce them out of mere humanity to establish the abolition and apprenticeship system in Jamaica. They know better than we, and experience has proved the correctness of their calculations, that the abolition of slavery was the instant destruction of all prosperity and fortune.

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“ ‘What was their calculation? it was no doubt to the following effect: The first blow at the colonies was the slave-trade abolition—the last will be the abolition of slavery. We no doubt shall lose some possessions by it, but France and Spain will lose more than we; in fact, they will lose every colony they possess, while the loss of a few islands will hardly count among us whose possessions are so vast.

“ ‘France and Spain will no longer have means of supplying themselves, and India will still remain ours: the only granary from which the world will be obliged to furnish itself with produce, which has now become as necessary to Europe as its own indigenous produce.’

“ ‘This argument might be correct,’ said Ernest, ‘if, as you say, ruin is the certain consequence of abolition.’

“ ‘Can you doubt it?’ said Mr. Owen, with the air of a man quite astonished that such a question could be put to him. ‘I was at Jamaica at the commencement of this organized catastrophe, and never did ruin march with such rapidity.

“ ‘But this question, for the present at least, is not necessary to prove to you by facts. The plans of the society, of which Mr. Welmoth is here the secret agent, will prove to you up to what point the abolition is considered by the English a means of infallible ruin. His first orders, *received from a society patronised by the East India Company, and perhaps by the English government itself*, are to become at the cheapest price possible the proprietor of the most considerable estates in the country.

“ ‘This done, Mr. Welmoth and others who, as you will see, will succeed him, will establish themselves at Guadaloupe; and once proprietors they will begin to labour according to the terms of their mission, and successively emancipate their slaves. In the name of philanthropy they will speed through the plantations ideas of revolt and enfranchisement.

“ ‘Five hundred, six hundred, twelve hundred slaves so liberated by them, will thus form a centre of *mauvais sujets*, round which the disaffected of the other plantations may rally. It will be a fomentation of discord, a commencement of disorganization, which may be the cause of new massacres. These dark enemies will be overcome no doubt; but it is to be feared that this spirit of insubordination will appear to the French chambers a symptom of the maturity of the slave for liberty, and that, hence, they will formally vote the abolition of slavery.

“ ‘Let this result be far off or near at hand, England will march with indefatigable perseverance, by means the most perfidious and the most obscure, as by the most splendid demonstrations of philanthropy. She will make every appeal to sentiments the most worthy as to those

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the most generous ; but she has one single aim to be attained by one infallible means, the ruin of the French colonies by means of the abolition of the slave trade,

“ ‘ This I know. This I am sure of. This Monsieur Sanson does not suspect from the frankness and loyalty of his nature. ’ ”

He may well have “ some hesitation ” in telling a story so damning to his country. But the secret is out now : and the perfidy of Albion unveiled. It is the East India Company, the rogues “ who organize periodical famines in India,” who have set the incendiaries to work in the French and Spanish colonies. Sir Welmoth has a mission from the Court of Directors (in the month of April, 1838), and in truth executes it with more than national perfidiousness. As he has a sincere love for his cousin, the daughter of the planter whose happy negroes have been described ; and as the young lady is heiress to the paternal property of which her future husband may look one day to have possession ; Sir Welmoth, in pursuit of his infernal schemes, begins by lending the father money so as to harass the property, and by *poisoning the negroes on the estate*. One may ask why the young patriot, if bent upon executing this scheme of “ the East India Company,” did not begin by poisoning *somebody else’s* negroes : but this, it will be remarked, is of a piece with the policy of the country at large. Before ruining the French colonies, we begun by ruining our own. But surely there is some break in the chain of argument here, and the author has here the subject for at least another chapter : for though a thief in the crowd, in order to avert suspicion, will often say he has been robbed, he will not really fling away his own purse containing twice as much as his victim’s, for the purpose of securing the latter.

This then we take to be a slight fault in the construction of the romance ; though to do the author justice, the plot for the most part is carried on with very considerable art. It is in pursuance of the instructions of the East India Company that Sir Welmoth is ordered to poison his uncle’s slaves, but the Court of Directors by no means wish that their agent should be

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discovered—so what does he do? He manages to lay the blame upon the poor young French gentleman, whose *negrophily* is well known; to *brouiller* him with his worthy correspondent; and finally, as his presence may be likely to *gêner* the plans of the Honourable East India Company, Sir Welmoth has him assassinated under the banyan-tree: whence the title of the novel.

The assassin wounds, but not kills his victim, who recovers as we need not say, to expose the infernal conspiracies of the atrocious emissary from Leadenhall-street. And the discovery is brought about by a novel, an ingenious method. Jean, the Frenchman's groom, has remarked that Sir Welmoth and his man John are in the habit of riding out of a night no doubt to meet the negroes in conclave; and through the means of this John, Jean determines to overcome the perfidious son of Albion. He watches John with intense accuracy for many days, and learns to mimic him *à s'y méprendre*. He purchases a scarlet and yellow livery, for all the world like John, intoxicates that individual, and follows his master. But we must allow Jean to tell his own tale:

"So I set myself to gallop after the Englishman, and we went a quarter of a league across country. Then we came to a wood where we had not gone four steps when Monsieur Welmoth turned suddenly to the right, so suddenly that I who was not used to the thing was galloping by him, when he stopped and turned round and said to me in a most furious passion . . . What the rascal said to me I don't know, as I don't happen to understand his lingo—but I could make out that he accused me of being drunk, and thought it not a bad hint to act on, and so kept a dead silence and acted my part to a wonder.

"Monsieur Welmoth tied his horse to a tree: then he said something which seemed to me like a question. So I said, yes, sir; and then he took out a whistle and blew. Another whistle answered it, as soft as the pipe of a frog on a rainy night, and that you may hear miles round. Then he said, 'John, my pistols.' I knew what he meant, and as I was getting the pistols from the holsters gave the horse a kick which made him plunge a bit, so that I had time to take the caps off the locks. . . . He went on and I followed him; not so silently, but that the bits of dry stick would crackle under my feet now and then:

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when Monsieur Welmoth would stop, and you may be sure I would stop and hold my breath too. Presently we saw a red light glaring under the trees, and heard such a sound of voices as drowned the noise of his steps and mine too.

"At last, and by the light of their candles, I saw some thirty of the niggers, amongst them that rascal Theodore, and that other rascal Idomenée. As for Monsieur Welmoth, if I had not been sure it was he, I never should have known him: for he was dressed in a green face and red eyes, and had on a great red cloak, just as in a play. It was not only to disguise himself but to frighten the negroes that he was dressed so; for as soon as they saw him, the poor black devils tumbled down on their knees; but I think they were less frightened than they pretended to be, for there was not one of them but when Monsieur Welmoth came up to him, he held out his hand bravely for a gold piece which the other gave him.

"After this, grace was said all round; the man in the mask began to speak in a hollow voice; and then it was that, without the slightest hesitation, he proposed to the niggers to set fire to the house of Madame de Cambasse. He said, saving your presence ma'am, that you were a monster, that you had killed thousands of slaves at Jamaica, and had whole scores of them in prison there, ironed down with chains that had spikes inside 'em.

"Idomenée replied that the master's orders should be obeyed: on which Welmoth said that if they did as he told them they should all be made free the next day, and pass their lives doing nothing for ever after. This touched them, and so did the rum which was handed round in plenty; during which time the mask and Idomenée began talking together in private, and precious rascality it was they talked, too, as you shall hear.

"'You understand that when the fire breaks out, and Monsieur Sanson sees it, in spite of his coolness with Madame de Cambasse [the planter was to have married this widow, but for the arts of the Englishman, who had managed to make a quarrel between them] he will be sure to come to her aid. I too, must of course, accompany him; but when we are near Madame de Cambasse's house, I will fire off my pistols, and you will take that as a signal for you and your people to withdraw.' And with this he gave Idomenée a taste of some particular rum he kept in a bottle about him, and so this worthy couple parted."

The attack is made, the black villains are overpowered. The mulatto and his principal accomplices, cut down, seized, and in custody. As he expected, the perfidious Englishman is called upon to make his appearance in company with the rescuers of

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Madame de Cambasse, and the following is the concluding scene of this strange story.

"I have no reason to say that Monsieur Sanson, though he wished to go, stopped. What man in love would not, when hoping to hear a justification of her conduct from the woman to whom he was attached? Welmoth looked attentively at all the objects and countenances round about him; he saw traces of blood on the ground; and judging then that a struggle had taken place determined to use the utmost prudence as some of his accomplices were perhaps prisoners. He was, however, only personally known to Idomenée, and had nothing to fear if the latter was not captured,

" 'This fire,' said Madame de Cambasse, 'which has brought you hither to my rescue, is not an accident as you suppose. It is the commencement of a plan which devotes this colony to ruin, and it is by the hands of the slaves that it is to be brought about.'

" 'I don't know whom you accuse,' said Monsieur Sanson: 'not me, certainly: the ruin of the colony would be my ruin, and the project therefore can only be attributed to persons who are strangers to the country, and who, excited by absurd philanthropy, or influenced by darker and more odious views, have vowed its destruction.'

" 'Sir!' said Clémenceau.

" 'These words of Monsieur Sanson,' continued Madame de Cambasse, 'apply no more to you than mine do to M. Welmoth, but I beg you to listen without interrupting me. This plot exists; and if, M. Sanson, I have been the first apparent victim of it, believe me that you have already suffered from it, although you were ignorant that your losses were but the commencement of the execution of the conspiracy. You have suffered by poison, as I was to suffer by fire, and with me the conspirators knew it was necessary to act quickly, as I had my suspicions of which they were aware.'

" 'But,' said M. Sanson, 'pardon me for saying that I can see no reason why you should suspect a conspiracy.'

" 'One of the conspirators has been seized in my house,' said Madame de Cambasse, and in spite of all his firmness, Welmoth's countenance showed signs of alarm and emotion. 'This incendiary,' continued Madame de Cambasse (without appearing to remark the Englishman's concern), 'is one of your slaves—Theodore—who commenced in your own plantation by poisoning your best workmen.'

" 'Bring him before me,' said Monsieur Sanson; 'let us question him at once.'

" 'Presently. But before he comes, let me tell you what we have already gathered from him. You will then judge whether his second

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replies will correspond with his first. This man has sworn that he was present to-night in the wood of Balisiers, at a meeting of blacks, where the burning of my house was proposed to him by an individual in a green mask with red circles round his eyes. He says he should not be able to recognise this man from his voice or his figure, which were both disguised; but the mulatto Idomenée knows him.'

"During Monsieur Clémenceau's illness, Idomenée was always making inquiries at his house. No doubt Monsieur Clémenceau is well acquainted with him, and could give us some information on this subject,' said Welmoth.

"Clémenceau was so astounded by this audacity of Welmoth's, that he was at a loss for a moment to find a word in reply: but Madame de Cambasse, who saw through Welmoth's project for shifting the accusation on another, said quietly, 'I don't know what Monsieur Clémenceau's relations with the mulatto may be, but with regard to the man in the mask, Monsieur Ernest can give us no information—he was here at the time of the meeting.'

"You seem to be very certain of the hour of this meeting,' said Welmoth, who could not help speaking as if he were accused.

"Sure of the hour, and of every circumstance belonging to it. This man in the mask, then, told Idomenée (and I beg you, my dear Monsieur Sanson, to attend to this) that the fire could be seen from the house which the mask inhabited; that he would very probably be compelled, therefore, to come to my aid; but in order to warn the incendiaries of his approach, he would fire off his pistols at a short distance from the house!'

"This last circumstance threw a terrible light upon Monsieur Sanson. 'Fire his pistols!' cried he, looking Sir Edward in the face. 'You attempted to fire yours at a short distance from this house.'

"Sir!' said Welmoth, 'after such a suspicion I cannot—'

"You could not fire your pistols,' said a man in full livery, who barred the passage and spoke in a burlesque French. 'You could not fire the pistols, because I had taken the caps away.'

"Who is this?' said Sir Edward, starting back at the caricature of John before him.

"I mean to say,' continued Jean, still mimicking John, 'that I made the Goddam drunk, Monsieur Sanson, and that I mounted his pony and followed the other Goddam to the negro-meeting, where I heard and saw every thing.'

"The French are great comedians, I have always heard,' said Welmoth, but I never knew they were such accomplished mountebanks as this.'

"They wear no masks, sir,' said Ernest, 'and as you do, let me help you to one.' And he was about to strike Welmoth in the face, but

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Monsieur Sanson held him back, while the Englishman, in the height of fury, aimed his pistol at Clémenceau's breast.

" 'It can't go off,' said Jean, laughing; 'I prevented.' And Welmoth, in a rage, dashed the weapons to the ground.

" 'It is not with pistols this affair must be settled,' said Ernest; 'it is a matter for the judge and the jury.'

" 'What?' cried Welmoth—'on the accusation of a slave who owns he does not know me—on the accusation of a man's servant whom I publicly challenged, and who had the cowardice to refuse—you believe me guilty! Uncle, have a care; this farce may turn to your shame.'

" 'We have other witnesses,' said Madame de Cambasse: 'bring in the prisoner.' At the sight of Idomenée Welmoth's countenance fell.

" 'You know Monsieur Welmoth?' said Monsieur Sanson.

" 'No.'

" 'He was not in the Wood des Balisiers to-night?'

" 'Nobody was in the Wood des Balisiers to-night.'

" 'What!' cried Jean, 'you were not in the wood, and you did not talk with him, and, hearing me move, you did not fling a knife towards the bush where I was, and wound me here in the thigh?'

" 'These are all lies,' said Idomenée.

" 'Bring in Theodore,' said Monsieur Sanson.

" 'Theodore is dead,' answered Idomenée.

" 'But at any rate the mask and mantle can't have disappeared,' cried Jean, 'and must be among this gentleman's effects.'

" 'Of course,' cried Welmoth, now quite himself, 'those who told the lie could easily have put a cloak and a mask in my baggage.'

" Monsieur Sanson held down his head and said, after a moment's silence, 'Pardon me, Edward, for having believed you guilty, but this comedy has been so cleverly arranged that I was deceived for a moment. As, however, it was one of my slaves who injured the property of Madame de Cambasse, and as I have no desire she should be injured by me or mine, I am quite ready to pay her an indemnity.'

" 'I wish for nothing but what the law awards,' said the lady. 'My only wish was to expose to you the infamous machinations of a villain.'

" She then sat down to write, while Edward preserved a perfectly unmoved countenance. Her note finished—'Mr. Owen,' said she, 'have the goodness to carry this immediately to the Procureur du Roi; if the principal criminal escape, here is one at any rate whom nothing can save. This mulatto forced an entry into my house with arms in his hands. He wounded me with his knife—this at least is no comedy.'

" Idomenée, in spite of himself, could not help giving a look at Sir Edward. He was perfectly unmoved.

" 'Let those who hired this villain save themselves as they can;

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continued Madame de Cambasse. Welmoth showed not the least concern at this insinuation. 'Had we not better leave Madame to her part of Grand Justiciary,' said he to M. Sanson, laughing.

"'I am at your orders, and was sure, Edward, you never could have lent yourself to this infamous conspiracy,' said M. Sanson. 'As for this unhappy man, the only chance remaining for him is to name his accomplices.'

"'It is what he had best do,' said Welmoth, calmly; 'and I advise him to do so. But it is to his judges, and not to us that he must confess.' As he spoke thus, Welmoth looked with some agitation towards Idomenée. Monsieur Sanson seemed quite confounded by the latter's silence.

"'Come,' cried Welmoth anxiously, 'let us go;' and Sanson moved forward, as if to leave the room.

"At this moment the mulatto staggered, and uttered a loud, horrible cry. 'Stop!' screamed he, 'stop, Monsieur Sanson;' and these words caused every one to pause.

"'I remember, now,' said the mulatto, groaning and writhing in pain; 'it was the rum he gave me in the wood. It was—it was—'

"'What?' cried every one.

"'It was poisoned—oh! poisoned! I was to go when I heard his pistol, and to die like a dog in the wood. That's the villain who made me fire upon M. Clémenceau.'

"'I knew it!' cried Jean.

"'That's—that's he who'—the wretch could say no more, he staggered and fell—but as he fell he made a bound towards Sir Edward as if he would have killed him, and fell dead at his feet. The Englishman looked at his victim in silence, and with a ferocious joy.

"'Monster!' cried Monsieur Sanson at length, and after a pause of horror, 'and will you still deny?'

"'What! do you join them too?' said Sir Edward. 'Is this the way in which you pay me back the gold guineas I lent you?'

"'The money is ready, sir; and the cause of my interview with Madame de Cambasse, whose fair fame you have calumniated, was to arrange the payment of this very sum, and to rescue Monsieur Sanson from the ruin you had prepared for him.'

"'Enough!' cried Sir Edward. 'I will answer no more questions of lackeys, knaves, and strumpets, and their silly dupes.'

"'Monsieur l'Anglais!' said Jean, 'shall I make you a present before you go? Here it is—the caps for your pistols; they'll serve you to blow your brains out with.'

"'I take them,' said Sir Edward, grinding his teeth, 'in order to send into your master's head the bullet I owe him.'

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"He was about to put them on, but ere he could do so, Jean rushed at him and felled him to the ground: those present rushed forward to rescue Sir Edward, thinking Jean was strangling him.

" 'Stop, stop,' shouted the domestic, 'I want to see this gentleman's flannel-waistcoat. John told me, when I made him drunk, that his master carried some curious papers there. Ah! here they are!' As he spoke, Jean seized the papers, and springing up gave them to Monsieur Sanson.

"But Sanson had scarcely begun to read them, when Welmoth was up too; he had taken the pistols from the ground where he flung them, and had armed them with the caps, which he still held in his hand.

" 'Now it's my turn,' said he, turning on the astonished and unarmed group who were gathered round the papers; 'listen to me, Monsieur Sanson, I caused Clémenceau to be shot, because he interfered with the projects of which I am pursuing the execution, and which shall ruin you one day. France must lose her colonies. England has decided it, and our decision is like that of Heaven, implacable and inevitable. I own it all; I was sent to ruin you—to ruin this woman's reputation; I organized the fire this night. There, you have my confession, and the proofs of my mission in the papers in your hand. What will be my fate?'

" 'The scaffold, wretch!' said Monsieur Sanson.

" 'Well, then, if I die for one crime or for ten what matters? And now hark you: I have two more to commit, which two victims shall I choose here?'

" 'Monster!' cried Monsieur Sanson.

" 'No, I will not hurt you; but this woman here, and this young dandy who would marry your daughter'—Madame de Cambasse turned pale, and Jean flung himself before her.

" 'Not a movement,' said Welmoth, 'or she is dead! But I make one bargain with you. There is a candle near you, M. Sanson; burn in it, one after another, the papers you have been reading, and I withdraw.'

" 'Never—never;' said M. Sanson.

" 'Be it as you will,' said Welmoth; and aimed at Madame de Cambasse, who fell on her knees almost dead with terror.

" 'Yield, in the name of heaven,' said Clémenceau.

" 'You are afraid for yourself,' said Welmoth; on which Clémenceau was about to rush forward, but Jean held him back, saying, 'Stand back, sir, the rascal will do what he says, else.'

" 'Enough, enough;' said M. Sanson; and put the papers to the flame. Welmoth saw him burn them, one after another; and when the last was consumed, he walked to the window, fired his two pistols

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in the air, and said, 'The honour of England is saved ; now, gentlemen, I am at your disposition.'

"This act of ferocious heroism struck Clémenceau and M. Sanson with a strange admiration. 'Go,' said the latter; 'the day is before you.'

"'Thank you,' said Sir Edward ; and left the room."

It is strange that the writer of the tale, a good man of business no doubt, as the present literary system in France will cause most writers to be, has not turned the above invention to still further profit, and adapted it for stage representation. The perfidious Englishman is a character drawn as if expressly for the actor of the villains of the Porte St. Martin Theatre, and the imitations of Jean the Frenchman as John the Goddam would convulse audiences with laughter. Nor is it necessary, in order to amuse these merry folks, that the imitations should be like ; it is only requisite that the imitation should be like what they are accustomed to hear ; and were a real Englishman to be produced on the stage they would give the palm to the sham one. They have an Englishman for their politics as well as for their theatre ; an Englishman of their own dressing up, a monstrous compound of ridicule and crime, grotesque, vulgar, selfish, wicked ; and they will allow their political writers to submit to them no other. There is no better proof of the intense hatred with which the nation regards us : of the rankling humiliation which for ever and ever seems to keep possession of a clever, gallant, vain, domineering, defeated people.

The contrast to this spirit in England is quite curious. Say to the English—the French hate you ; night and day they hate you ; the government that should find a pretext of war with you would be hailed with such shouts of exultation from one end of the country to the other, as never were heard since the days when the Patrie was in danger ; till they can meet you in war they pursue you with untiring calumny—say this, and an Englishman, yawning, answers, "It is impossible," and declares

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that the person who so speaks is actuated by a very bad spirit, and wishes to set the two countries quarrelling. If an English newspaper were to take the pains to collect and publish the lies against England which appeared in the Paris journals of any given month (the month of her Majesty's visit to France would hardly be a fair criterion, it was an extraordinary event, and afforded therefore scope for extraordinary lying)—there would be such a catalogue as would astonish readers here. Abuse of England is the daily bread of the French journalist. He writes to supply his market. If his customers were tired of the article, would he give it to them? No; he would abuse the Turks, or praise the English, or abuse or praise the Russians, or write in praise or abuse of any other country or subject, that his readers might have a fancy to admire or hate. All other fashions, however, seem to have their day in France but this, and this is of all days. They never tire of abusing this country. The Carlist turns on the government-man, and says, "You truckle to the English." The government-man retorts, "Who ever truckled to the English as much as you did, who came into power with his bayonet, and thanked him, under God, for your restoration?" The republican reviles them both with all his might, and says that one courts the foreigner as much as the other.

If we speak in this manner, apropos of a mere novel of a few hundred pages, it is because we believe that Monsieur Soulié had his brief given to him, and was instructed to write in a particular vein. His facts, such as they are, have been supplied to him; for there are evidences that the writer has some sort of information upon the subjects on which he writes, and there are proofs of wilful perversions from some quarter or other. Take, for instance, the description of a treadmill. "This punishment of the treadmill consists in *hanging* slaves by the wrists, in such a manner that their feet are placed upon the wings of a wheel. The wheel always yields under their feet, and thus obliges the patient to seek a footing upon the upper wing. The wheel serves likewise to grind the prisoners'

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corn. An executioner (*bourreau*) armed with a hammer (*martinet*)—the whip appeared too mild to these worthy protectors of the negro race—an executioner, I say, placed by the side of the mill, is employed to excite the indolence of those who do not move quick enough on the wheel: *and a physician from time to time feels the pulse of the person under punishment, in order to see how long he can bear the torture.*" Now this is written with evident bad faith, very likely not on the writer's part, but on the part of some one who has seen this instrument of torture, a treadmill, and whose interest it is to maintain the slave-trade in the French colonies, and who knows that, in order to enlist the mother-country in his favour, he has no surer means than to excite its prejudices by stories of the cruelties and conspiracies of England. Statements are proved in different modes, arguments are conducted in all sorts of ways; and this novel is an argument for the slave-trade, proved by pure lying. Its proofs are lies, and its conclusion is a lie. It stands thus: "The English have fomented a demoniacal conspiracy against the slave-trade in the French colonies. The English are our wicked, false, dastardly, natural enemies, and we are bound to hate them. Therefore slavery is a praiseworthy institution and ought to be maintained in the French colonies." It is to this argument that Monsieur Soulié has devoted three volumes which are signed by his celebrated name.

A romancer is not called upon to be very careful in his logic, it is true; fiction is his calling; but surely not fictions of this nature. Let this sort of argumentation be left to the writers of the leading articles; it has an ill look in the feuilleton, which ought to be neutral ground, and where peaceable readers are in the habit of taking refuge from national quarrels and abuse; from the envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, that inflame the patriots of the *Premier Paris*. All the villains whom the romancer is called upon to slay, are those whom he has created first, and over whom he may exercise the utmost severities of his imagination. Let the count go mad, or the heroine swallow

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poison, or Don Alphonso run his rival through the body, or the French ship or army at the end of the tale blow up the English and obtain its victory; these harmless cruelties and ultimate triumphs, are the undoubted property of the novelist, and we receive them as perfectly fair warfare. But let him not deal in specific calumnies, and inculcate, by means of lies, hatred of actual breathing flesh and blood. This task should be left to what are called *hommes graves* in France, the sages of the war newspapers.

As to these latter, which are daily exposing the deep-laid schemes and hypermachiavellian craft of England, we wonder they have not noticed as yet another sordid and monstrous conspiracy of which this country is undoubtedly the centre. If this audacious plot be allowed to succeed, the nationalities of Europe will gradually, but certainly disappear; the glorious recollections of feats of arms, and the noble emulation to which they give rise, will be effaced by a gross merchant despotism; the spirit of patriotism will infallibly die away, and, to meet the aggressions of the enemy, the frontier shall be lined with warriors, and the tribune resound with oratory no more. The public press, the guardian of liberty, the father of manly thought, shall be as it were dumb: the *Siccle* may cry woe to perfidious Albion, and the public, stricken with a fatal indifference, shall be too stupid to tremble; the *National* may shout murder and treason against England, and a degenerate nation only yawn in reply. "A conspiracy tending to produce this state of things," we can imagine one of those patriotic journals to say, "exists, spreads daily, its progress may be calculated foot by foot all over Europe. The villains engaged in it are leagued against some of the most precious and ancient institutions of the world. What can be more patriotic than to protect a national industry? their aim is to abolish trade-protection, and to sweep custom-houses from the face of the earth. What can be more noble than love of country and national spirit? these conspirators would strike at the root of

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the civic virtues. What can be more heroic than the ardour which inspires our armies, and fills our youth with the generous desire of distinction in war? these conspirators, if they have their way, will not have an army standing; they will make a mockery and falsehood of glory, the noble aim of gallant spirits; they will smother with the bales of their coarse commerce, the laurels of our former achievements; the swords of Marengo and Austerlitz will be left to rust on the walls of our children; and they will clap corks upon the bayonets with which we drove Europe before us." The RAILROAD, we need not say, is the infernal English conspiracy to which we suppose the French prophet to allude. It has been carried over to France by Englishmen. It has crept from Rouen to the gates of Paris; from Rouen it is striding towards the sea at Southampton; from Paris it is rushing to the Belgian frontier and the channel. It is an English present. *Timele Danaos*: there is danger in the gift.

For when the frontier is in a manner destroyed, how will the French youth be able to rush to it? Once have railroads all over Europe, and there is no more use for valour than for post-chaises now on the north road. Both will be exploded institutions. The one expires, because nobody will ride; the other dies, because nobody will fight; it is cheaper, easier, quicker, more comfortable to take the new method of travelling. And as a post-chaise keeper is ruined by a railroad, and as a smuggler is ruined by free trade; those concerned in the maintenance of numberless other ancient usages, interests, prejudices, must look to suffer by coming changes. Have London at twelve hours' journey from Paris, and even Frenchmen will begin to travel. The readers of the *National* and the *Commerce* will have an opportunity of judging for themselves of that monstrous artful island, which their newspapers describe to them as so odious. They will begin to see that hatred of the French nation is not the sole object of the Englishman's thoughts, as their present instructor would have them

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believe ; that the grocer of Bond-street has no more wish to assassinate his neighbour of the Rue St. Honoré, than the latter has to murder his rival of the Rue St. Denis; that the ironmonger is not thinking about humiliating France, but only of the best means of selling his kettles and fenders. Seeing which peaceful and harmless disposition on our part, the wrath of Frenchmen will melt and give way : or rather let us say, as our island is but a small place, and France a great one—as we are but dull shopkeepers without ideas, and France the spring from which all the Light and Truth of the world issues—that when we are drawn so near to it, we shall sink into it and mingle with it as naturally as a drop of rain into the ocean (or into a pail), and at once and for ever be absorbed in the flood of French Civilization.

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OF the myriads of books now yearly appearing which Time shall swallow up, so that they or their memory be no more seen, we hope this little work of Madame de Girardin's will not be one. Not that it is more innocent or intrinsically worthy of life than many others of its companions which will be handed over to the inevitable Destroyer; but it deserves to have a corner in a historical library, where even much more natural and meritorious publications might be excluded; just as a two-headed child will get a place in a museum-bottle, when an ordinary creature, with the usual complement of skull, will only go the way the sexton shows it. The "Lettres Parisiennes" give a strange picture of a society, of an age, and of an individual. One or the other Madame Girardin exposes with an admirable unconscious satire; and this is satire of the best and wholesomest sort. One is apt to suspect the moralist whose indignation makes his verse or points his wit; one cannot tell how much of personal pique mars the truth of his descriptions, or how many vices or passions are painted after the happy ever-present model himself; and while we read Swift's satires of a sordid, brutal, and wicked age, or Churchill's truculent descriptions of the daring profligates of his time, we know the first to be black-hearted, wicked, and envious, as any monster he represents, and have good reason to suspect the latter to be the dissolute ruffian whom he describes as a characteristic of his times.

But the world *could* never be what the dean painted as he looked at it with his furious, mad, glaring eyes; nor was it the wild drunken place which Churchill, reeling from a tavern,

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fancied he saw reeling round about him. We might as well take the word of a sot, who sees four candles on the table where the sober man can only perceive two ; or of a madman who peoples a room with devils that are quite invisible to the doctor. Our Parisian chronicler, whose letters appear under the pseudonym of the Vicomte de Launay, is not more irrational than his neighbours. The vicomte does not pretend to satirize his times more than a gentleman would who shares in the events which he depicts, and has a perfectly good opinion of himself and them ; if he writes about trifles it is because his society occupies itself with such, and his society is, as we know, the most refined and civilised of all societies in this world ; for is not Paris the European capital, and does he not speak of the best company there ?—Indeed, and for the benefit of the vulgar and unrefined, the vicomte's work ought to be translated, and would surely be read with profit. Here might the discontented artisan see how his betters are occupied ; here might the country gentleman's daughter who, weary of her humdrum village-retirement, pines for the delights of Paris, find those pleasures chronicled of which she longs to take a share ; and if we may suppose she possesses (as she does always in novels and often in real life) a sage father or guardian, or a reflective conscience of her own, either monitor will tell her a fine moral out of the Vicomte de Launay's letters, and leave her to ask is this the fashionable life that I have been sighing after—this heartless, false, and above all, intolerably wearisome existence, which the most witty and brilliant people in the world consent to lead ? As for the man of the humbler class, if after musing over this account of the great and famous people he does not learn to be contented with his own condition, all instruction is lost upon him, and his mind is diseased by a confirmed enviousness which no reason or reality will cure.

Nor is the Vicomte de Launay's sermon, like many others, which have undeniable morals to them, at all dull in the

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reading ; every page, on the contrary, is lively and amusing—it sparkles with such wit as only a Frenchman can invent—it abounds with pleasing anecdote, bright pictures of human life, and happy turns of thought. It is entirely selfish and heartless, but the accomplished author does not perceive this : its malice is gentlemanlike and not too ill-natured : and its statements, if exaggerated, are not more so than good company warrants. In a society where a new carriage, or new bonnet, is a matter of the greatest importance, how can one live but by exaggerating ? Lies, as it were, form a part of the truth of the system. But there is a compensation for this, as for most other things in life—and while one set of duties or delights are exaggerated beyond measure, another sort are depreciated correspondingly. In that happy and genteel state of society where a new carriage, or opera, or bonnet, become objects of the highest importance, morals become a trifling matter ; politics futile amusement ; and religion an exploded ceremony. All this is set down in the vicomte's letters, and proved beyond the possibility of a doubt.

And hence the great use of having real people of fashion to write their own lives, in place of the humble male and female authors, who, under the denomination of the Silver Fork School, have been employed by silly booksellers in our own day. They cannot give us any representation of the real authentic genteel fashionable life, they will relapse into morality in spite of themselves, do what they will they are often vulgar, sometimes hearty and natural ; they have not the unconscious wickedness, the delightful want of principle, which the great fashionable man possesses, none of the grace and ease of vice. What pretender can, for instance, equal the dissoluteness of George Selwyn's Letters, lately published ?—What mere literary head could have invented Monsieur Suisse and his noble master ? We question whether Mr. Beckford's witty and brilliant works could have been written by any but a man in the very best company ; and so it is with the Vicomte de

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Launay,—his is the work of a true person of fashion, the real thing, (the real sham, some misanthropist may call it, but these are of a snarling and discontented turn,) and no mere pretender could have equalled them. As in the cases of George Selwyn and Monsieur Suisse, mentioned before, the De Launay Letters do not tell all, but you may judge by a part of the whole, of Hercules by his foot,—by his mere bow, it is said, any one (in high life) might judge his late Majesty George IV., to be the most accomplished man in Europe. And so with De Launay, though he speak but about the last new turban which the Countess wore at the opera, or of her liaison with the Chevalier —, you may see by the gravity with which he speaks of that turban, and the graceful lightness with which he recounts the little breakage of the seventh commandment in question, what is the relative importance of each event in his mind, and how (we may therefore pretty fairly infer) the *beau monde* is in the habit of judging them. Some French critics who have spoken of Vicomte de Launay's work, do, it is true, deny his claim to rank as a man of fashion, but there are delicate shades in fashion and politeness, which a foreigner cannot understand, and many a person will pass among us for well-bred, who is not what Mrs. Trollope calls *la crème de la crème*. The vicomte does not, as it would seem, frequent those great and solemn houses of the Faubourg St. Germain, where the ancient nobility dwell, (and which are shut to all the *roture**)—but he is welcomed at the court of Louis Philippe, and the balls of the ambassadors (so much coveted by our nation in France)—he dances in all the salons of the Faubourg, and he has a box at all the operas; if Monsieur de Castellane gives a private play, the Vicomte is sure to be in the front seats; if the *gentlemen-sportsmen* of the Jockey-club on the

* Except as in the case of a rich American, who, though once a purser of a ship, has been adopted by the nobles of the Faubourg St. Germain, and is said to have *cut* "the family at the Tuileries," and all his old acquaintances of the *Chaussée d'Antin*.

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Boulevard have a racing or gambling match in hand, he is never far off : he is related to the chamber of deputies, and an influential party there ; he has published poems, and plays, and commands a newspaper ; and hence his opportunities of knowing poets, authors, and artists, are such as must make him a chronicler of no ordinary authenticity.

It is of matters relating to all these people that the gay and voluble vicomte discourses ; and if we may judge of the success of his letters by the number of imitations which have followed them, their popularity must have been very great indeed. Half-a-dozen journals at least have their weekly chronicle now upon the De Launay model, and the reader of the French and English newspapers may not seldom remark in the "own correspondence" with which some of the latter prints are favoured, extracts and translations from the above exclusive sources, compiled by the ambassadors of the English press in Paris, for the benefit of their public here.

It would be impossible perhaps for a journal here to produce any series of London letters similar in kind to those of which we are speaking. The journalist has not the position in London which is enjoyed by his Parisian brother. Here the journal is everything, and the writer a personage studiously obscure ;—if a gentleman, he is somehow most careful to disguise his connection with literature, and will avow any other profession but his own : if not of the upper class, the gentry are strangely shy and suspicious of him, have vague ideas of the danger of "being shown up" by him, and will flock to clubs to manifest their mistrust by a black ball. Society has very different attentions for the Parisian journalists, and we find them admitted into the saloons of ambassadors, the cabinets of ministers, and the boudoirs of ladies of fashion. When shall we ever hear of Mr. This, theatrical critic for the *Morning Post*, at Lady Londonderry's ball, or Mr. That, editor of the *Times*, closeted with Sir Robert Peel, and "assisting" the prime minister to prepare a great parliamentary paper or a Queen's

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speech? And, indeed, with all possible respect for the literary profession, we are inclined to think the English mode the most wholesome in this case, and that it is better that the duchesses, the ministers, and the literary men, should concert with their kind, nor be too intimate with each other.

For the truth is, the parties have exceedingly few interests in common. The only place in England we know of where the great and the small frankly consort, is the betting ring at Epsom and Newmarket, where his grace will take the horse-dealer's odds and *vice versa*,—that is the place of almost national interest and equality, but what other is there? At Exeter Hall (another and opposite national institution) my lord takes the chair and is allowed the lead, Go to Guildhall on a feast day, my lords have a high table for themselves, with gold and plate, where the commoners have crockery, and no doubt with a prodigious deal more green fat in the turtle soup than falls to the share of the poor sufferers at the plebeian table. The theatre *was* a place where our rich and poor met in common, but the great have deserted that amusement, and are thinking of sitting down to dinner, or are preparing for the Opera when three acts of the comedy are over, The honest citizen who takes his simple walk on a Sunday in the park comes near his betters, it is true, but they are passing him in their carriages or on horseback,—nay, it must have struck any plain person who may have travelled abroad in steamboat or railroad, how the great Englishman, or the would-be great (and the faults of a great master, as Sir Joshua Reynolds says, are always to be seen in the exaggerations of his imitators), will sit alone perched in his solitary carriage on the fore-deck, rather than come among the vulgar crowd who are enjoying themselves in the more commodious part of the vessel. If we have a fault to find with the fashionable aristocracy of this free country, it is not that they shut themselves up and do as they like, but that they ruin honest folks who will insist upon imitating them : and this is not their fault—it is ours. A philosopher has but to

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walk into the Bedford and Russell Square district, and wonder over this sad characteristic of his countrymen ; it is written up in the large bills in the windows which show that the best houses in London are to let. There is a noble mansion in Russell Square, for instance, of which the proprietors propose to make a club—but the inhabitants of Bloomsbury who want a club must have it at the west end of the town, as far as possible from their own unfashionable quarter ; those who *do* inhabit it want to move away from it ; and you hear attorneys' wives and honest stockbrokers' ladies talk of quitting the vulgar district, and moving towards "*the court end*," as if they were to get any good by living near her Majesty the Queen, at Pimlico ! Indeed, a man who after living much abroad, returns to his own country, will find there is no meanness in Europe like that of the freeborn Briton. A woman in middle life is afraid of her lady's-maid if the latter has lived in a lord's family previously. In the days of the existence of the C—— club, young men used to hesitate and make apologies before they avowed they belonged to it ; and the reason was—not that the members were not as good as themselves, but because they were not better. The club was ruined because there were not lords enough in it. The young barristers, the young artists, the young merchants from the city, would not, to be sure, speak to their lordships if they were present, but they pined in their absence—they sought for places where their august patrons might occasionally be seen and worshipped in silence ; and the corner of Waterloo Place is now dark, and the friendly steam of dinners no longer greets the passers by there at six o'clock. How those deserters would have rallied round a couple of dukes, were they ever so foolish, and a few marquises no wiser than the author of a certain Voyage to Constantinople.

Thus, as it seems to us, the great people in England have killed our society. It is not their fault : but it is our meanness. We might be very social and happy without them if we would :

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but follow them we must, and as in the good old vicar's time, the appearance of Lady Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs amongst us (whom we *will* ask) instantly puts a stop to the joviality and free flow of spirits which reigned before her ladyship's arrival; and we give up nature and blindman's buff for stiff conversations about "Shakspeare and the musical glasses." This digression concerning English Society has to be sure no actual reference to the subject in hand, save that moral one which the Reviewer sometimes thinks fit to point out to his reader, who travelling with him in the spirit to foreign countries, may thus their manners noting, and their realms surveying, be induced to think about his own.

With this let us cease further moralizing, and as we have shown in the above sentences that the English reader delights in none but the highest society, and as we have humbly alluded in a former paragraph to young countrywomen, who, possibly weary of the sameness of their hall or village, yearn after the delight of Paris and the splendours of the entertainments there; perhaps some such will have no objection to accompany Madame or Monsieur Girardin de Launay through the amusements of a Paris season, in that harmless fashion in which Shacabac partook of the first feast offered by the Barmecide, and which entails no evil consequences upon the feaster. It is the winter of 1837. Charles X. is just dead at Goritz, and we (the vicomte and his reader) are for a while too genteel to dance in public in consequence of the poor old monarch's demise. We pass some pathetic remarks on the fate of exiled kings; we wonder how it happens that the Tuileries do not go into mourning. We do so ourselves, just to be in the fashion and to show our loyalty, but only for a few days—lest people should fancy we could not afford to purchase spring fashions, and so having decently buried the sovereign we give a loose to our pleasures, and go of course to Madame d'Appeny's ball.

"You have no idea how diamonds and your own hair are

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come into fashion again—we remark this at the ball of the ambassador of Austria, where really and truly the whole room glistened with diamonds. Diamonds and hair! everyone puts on everybody's own diamonds, and everybody else's—everybody wears their own hair, and somebody else's besides. Look at the Duchess of Sutherland. Have you seen her grace and her diamonds—all the world is crowding to look at them; and as he goes to look at her magnificent diadem, worth two millions it is said, many a young man has *bien des distractions* in gazing at her grace's beautiful eyes and charming face.

“This is in the Faubourg St. Honoré—as for the people in the Faubourg St. Germain, the poor creatures, on account of the poor dear king's death, dare not dance—they *only* waltz—its more *triste* to waltz, more becoming—it seems by chance as it were. Someone sits down to the piano and plays a little waltz—just a little pretty one—and someone else begins to turn round in time. It is not a dance—no invitations were given, only a few young people have amused themselves by keeping time to M. de X. or Léon de B. They were in white, but their parents were in black all the time—for the good old king, the first gentleman in Europe (the French too had a first gentleman in Europe), lies dead yonder at Goritz.

“As Lent comes on, we are of course too well-bred not to go to church. And to speak about the preachers, *fi donc*! but we positively must hear M. de Ravignan, for all the world goes to Nôtre Dame, and M. Dupanloup at Saint Roch, and the Abbé Combalot at Saint Eustache. We only mention their names as a fact, and to point out that there *is a return towards religion*, at which we are very happy; but as for commenting upon, or criticising the works of these ‘austere inspired ones,’ we must not venture to do it; they speak for our salvation and not for their own glory, and we are sure, must be quite above all worldly praise. And so no more about religion in Lent. And oh, it is *quite frightful* to think how the people do dance in Lent as it is!”

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ENGLISHWOMEN AT A FRENCH BALL.

"The masked ball given in benefit of the English has been so successful, that imitations may be looked for; the ball of the civil list is to be in the same fashion it is said. We dearly love masked-balls—handsome women appear there under quite novel aspects, and as for ugly women whom a brilliant imagination carries thither, why they become delightful too, in their way, the Englishwomen above all, there is such an engaging frankness. It must be confessed that if we look at the handsome English and admire them with something like envy and bitterness of heart, there are natives of a certain other sort whom the 'perfidious Albion' sends over to us, and who charm us beyond expression; let us say it to the island's double renown, that if the modern Venus, that is beauty, has come to us from the waves of the channel, the very contrary goddess (whom we need not name) has risen in full dress out of the frightened waves of the Thames. In a word, we admit that our neighbours provide our fêtes with the most beautiful women, and with those who are most of the other sort. They do nothing by halves the Englishwomen, they bring beauty to perfection or they carry ugliness to distraction; in this state they cease to be women altogether, and become beings of which the classification is impossible. One looks like an old bird, another like an old horse, a third, like a young donkey—some have a bison look, some a dromedary appearance, and all a poodle cast. Now all this seated quietly in a drawing-room, and reputedly dressed looks simply ugly, and there's an end of it; but set it off in a masked ball—all these poor things dressed and bedizened, all these strange faces, and graces, and grimaces, twisting and hurling, and ogling and leering their best, you can't conceive what a wonderful effect they have! If you could but have seen them the other day in the Salle Ventadour with seven or eight feathers in their heads; red feathers, blue feathers, black feathers, peacocks' feathers, cocks' feathers, all the feathers of all the birds in the air—if you could have seen their satisfied looks as they glanced at the looking-glasses, and the grace with which their fair fingers repaired some enchanting disorder of the dress, and the perseverance with which they placed in its right position over the forehead that charming ringlet which *would* come upon the nose, and the yellow slipper, or the brown one, withdrawn or protruded with a like winning grace, and all the shells, and beads, and bracelets, and all the ornaments from all the jewel boxes of the family conglomerated on one strange person, and looking as if astonished to find themselves so assembled; you would say as we do, it is a charming thing a *bal costumé*, and if anybody offers to show you such a sight for a louis, give it, my dear friend, you never laid out money so well."

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Indeed any person who has been in a Paris ball-room will allow that the description is a very true and very amusing one ; and as we are still addressing the ladies, we would beg them to take warning, by the above remarks, on their visits to Paris ; to remember what pitiless observers are round about them in the meager persons of their French acquaintance ; to reflect that their costume, in its every remotest part, is subject to eyes so critical, that not an error can escape ; and hence, seeing the almost impossibility, from insular ignorance, to be entirely in the mode, to cultivate a noble, a becoming simplicity, and be, as it were, above it. The handsomest women in Europe can best afford to go unadorned—it is different for a Parisian beauty, lean, yellow, and angular ; *her* charms require all the aids of address, while her rival's are only heightened by simplicity. And but that comparisons are odious in all instances, and in this not certainly flattering, we would venture to point out an unromantic analogy between Beauty and Cookery in the two countries. Why do the French have recourse to sauces, stews, and other culinary disguisements ?—because their meat is not good. Why do the English content themselves with roast and boiled ?—because they need no preparations. And so Beauty like Beef . . . But let us adopt a more becoming and genteel tone. Scotland is the country where agriculture is best understood—France is most famous for the culture of the toilet—and for the same reason ; the niggardliness of nature to both countries, with which let us console ourselves for any little national wants among ourselves.

We are sure the fair reader will have no objection to accompany Madame de Girardin to a ball at so genteel a place as the English Embassy, where Lady Granville is celebrating the birthday of our sovereign.

“ On Friday was the beautiful *fête* to celebrate the birthday of the Queen of England : and as it is a woman who is king in England, the men did not wear uniform at Lord Granville's ball, but the women.

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Nothing could look more agreeable than all these white robes, strewed over with roses, which made the most respectable matrons of the company look young. It was the *fête* of the rose: and never did the royal flower shine with more splendour. At the corner of each door was a mountain of rose-trees in flower, ranged upon invisible steps: indeed a beautiful sight; and here and there you might perceive some of the fair young dancers picking roses in order to replace the graceful bouquets of their robes, which the whirl of the waltz had carried away. Nor was the little theft likely of detection: there were enough roses there to crown all the hundred-and-sixty English families with their eighteen daughters—Isabella, Arabella, Rosina, Susanna, Eliza, Mary, Lucy, Betsey, Nancy, &c. &c.

“Besides the flowers of the magnificent gardens and hothouses of the embassy, ten or twelve hundred rose-trees had been sent for, of which only eight hundred, it is said, could find a place in the reception-rooms. Judge from this of the mythological splendour of the scene. The garden was covered with a tent, and arranged as a conversation-room. But what a room! The large beds, filled with flowers, were enormous *jardinières* that all the world came to see—the gravel-walks were covered over with fresh cloths, full of respect for the white satin slippers of the dancers; great sofas of damask and velvet replaced the garden seats. On a round table there were books, and it was a pleasure to come and muse and breathe the air in this vast boudoir, from which one could hear the noise of the music, like fairy songs in the distance, and see passing away like happy shades, in the three long galleries of flowers round about, the lovely and sprightly young girls who were hastening to the dance, and the lovely, but more sedate young married women, who were hieing to the supper.

“There never is a *fête* without a *lion*, and the lion on this occasion was a charming Anglo-Italian princess, whose appearance made the most lively impression. Lady Mary Talbot, married two months since to the Prince Doria, had arrived from Genoa only a few hours before the ball, and only thought of going to rest after so long a journey, and with regret of the splendid festival she must miss seeing. How could a person, arrived only at four, think of being present at a *fête* at ten o'clock? Had it been four o'clock in the morning, there might have been a chance yet to prepare a dress, and to recruit oneself from the fatigues of travel. But now the case seemed hopeless, when of a sudden the following wonderful words were uttered at the princess's door, ‘A ball dress is just brought for Madame la Princesse.’ And as one sees the courser stretched idly in the meadow start up and bound across the plain at the first signal of the warlike trumpet, so did the fair young traveller, stretched idly upon her couch, rouse herself on a

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sudden, and bound to the dressing-table at the first signal of coquetry. Whence came this robe so beautiful? what beneficent fairy had commanded it? That question is easily answered—only a real friend could have thought of such an attention. And shall I tell you, young beauties, how to know a true friend? She who admires you, deceives you; she who makes others admire you, really loves you."

In this passage the viscount-disguise is surely thrown off altogether and the woman appears, as natural and as coquettish as Heaven made her. If we have occasionally cause to complain of the viscount's want of sincerity, here, at least, we have no right to suspect Madame de Girardin. The incident of the dress overcomes her nature; and in the enthusiasm of the moment, she lets the great secret regarding her sex escape her. But for the moralities that have already been uttered, how long and how profitable a sermon might be composed with that last sentence for a text! "She who admires you, deceives you; she who causes you to be admired, loves you." What a picture it is of the woman of the world, and her motives, and her simplicity, and her sincerity, and her generosity. That was a fatal confession, Madame de Girardin. It may be true, but it was a fault to say it; and one can't but think of the woman who uttered it with an involuntary terror. Thus we have seen a man boast that he would play any tricks upon the cards, and cut any given one any number of times running, which he did, and the world admired—but nobody afterwards was anxious to play at *écarté* with that man; no, not for a penny a game.

And now having introduced the English reader to two such fashionable assemblies as the foregoing, we must carry them into company still more genteelly august, and see the queen and the Princess Helen. It is in this easy, lively way that the gay Parisian describes the arrival of the amiable widow of the Duke of Orleans.

A FÊTE-DAY AT PARIS.

"The garden of the Tuileries was splendidly beautiful yesterday—it was beautified by the king's orders and by the people's—by the sky's

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and by the spring's. What a noble and cheerful sight it was! Go hang yourselves, ye inhabitants of the provinces, you who could not see this magnificent picture, for the canvas is torn, and the piece will never be exhibited again. Fancy now sights such as were never before seen at Paris at the same time: fancy a sky bright blue—fancy the trees real green—the people neat and well-dressed—and the crowd joyous and in its best attire, revelling in the perfumes of the flowering lilies. Confess now you never saw any thing like that—at Paris when the sky is blue the trees are always gray, for the dust eats them up—at Paris when the trees are green then you may be sure it has just rained, and all the people are muddy and dirty . . . Oh, how brilliant nature was that day, youthful and yet strong—young and yet powerful, fresh and ripe, budding and full: it was like the passion of a pure girl who should have waited till five-and-twenty before she began to love—it had all the purity of a first love—but a first-love experienced when the heart had attained its utmost power and perfection.

“How noble those lofty chesnuts are—how finely do their royal flowers contrast with the sombre verdure of their leaves!

“Look from here and see what a fine sight it is. The great alley of the garden is before us—on the right, three ranks of national guards; on the left, three of troops of the line. Behind them the crowd—elegant and brilliant with a thousand colours. Before us is a basin with its fountain, which mounts upwards in a sunbeam: behind the jet d'eau, look, you see the obelisk, and behind that the arch of triumph. By way of frame to the picture are two terraces covered with people, and great trees everywhere. Look down for a moment at yonder flower-beds and tufts of lilac—every one of them blossomed on the same day. What perfume! what sunshine! Hush! here's a courier, the procession must be drawing near—now comes a postilion all covered with dust, and gallops away: and now comes a poodle dog and gallops away too, quite frightened—immense laughter and applause from the crowd. After the poodle comes a greyhound, still more alarmed—still more laughter and applause from the crowd—and the first part of the procession serves to keep the public in good humour. A stout workwoman in a cap elbows a genteel old beauty, and says, ‘Let me see the Princess, ma'am; you, you can go and see her at court.’ The genteel old beauty looks at her with a sneer, and says to her daughter, ‘The court, indeed! The good woman does not seem to know that there is much more likelihood for her to go to that court than for us.’ ‘No doubt,’ says the young lady. ‘Only let her marry a grocer, and they'll make her a great lady.’ By which dialogue we learn that the legitimists also have condescended to come and see the procession. At last it comes. See! here are the cuirassiers, they divide, and you see the reflection

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of their breast-plates flashing in the fountain. Now comes the cavalry of the national guards. What a fine corps, and what a fine horse Mr. G—— has! The king! M. Montalivet—the ministers—they go too fast, I can't see anything. The Queen! how noble she looks; how charmingly dressed—what a *ravishing* blue hat! The Princess Helen looks round this way, how young her face seems! ah, now you can only see her hat, it is a sweet pretty one, in white *paille de riz*, with a drooping marabout. Her robe is very elegant, white muslin, doublé with rose. The Duke of Orleans is on horseback by the Queen's side; but, mercy on us, who *are* those people in the carriages of the suite? Did you ever see such old bonnets and gowns—for a triumphal entry into Paris, surely they might have made a little toilet! The *cortège* has a shabby air. The carriages are extremely ugly, and too full—indeed, it was more worth waiting for it than seeing it."

If an English Baker-street lady had been called upon to describe a similar scene in her own country, we fancy her letter would have been conceived in a very different spirit from that of the saucy Parisian. The latter does not possess the Baker-street respect for the powers that be, and looks at kings and queens without feeling the least oppression or awe. A queen in a "*ravissante capote bleue*"—a princess of whom the description is that she is a "*jolie Parisienne*."—Is not this a sad disrespectful manner of depicting an august reigning family? Nor, if we guess right, would Baker-street have condescended to listen to the vulgar conversation of the poor woman in the crowd who was so anxious to see the procession. The sneer of the great lady from the Faubourg St. Germain is very characteristic, and the deductions by the lookers-on not a little malicious and keen. The tasty description of the spring, too, at the commencement of the passage, where its warmth is likened to the love of an "*honnête jeune fille de 25 ans*," could only have been written by a French woman deeply versed in matters of the heart. Elsewhere she utters still more queer and dangerous opinions of the female sex, as this.

"Just look at the '*femmes passionnées*' of our day, about whom the world talk. They all began by a marriage of ambition: they have all desired to be rich, countesses, marchionesses, duchesses, before they

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desired to be loved. It is not until they recognised the vanities of vanity, that they have resolved upon love. There are some among them who have simply gone back to the past, and at eight-and-twenty or thirty passionately devote themselves to the obscure youth whose love they refused at seventeen. M. de Balzac is right, then, in painting love as he finds it in the world, superannuated that is; and M. Janin is right too in saying that this sort of love is very dull. But if it is dull for novel-readers, how much more dismal is it for young men, who dream of love, and who are obliged to cry out in the midst of their transports about the beloved object, 'I love her,' and 'Oh heavens, how handsome *she must have been!*' "

The "femme passionnée" we see then to be a recognised fact in French fashionable life, and here, perhaps, our young Englishwoman, who has read the genteel descriptions eagerly will begin to be rather scandalised at the society into which she is introduced, and acknowledge that the English modes are the best. Well, well; passion is a delicate subject—there is a great deal more about it in this book (or of what is called passion in Paris) than, perhaps, English mothers of families would like to hear of: let us rather be faithful to *fashion* and as we have read of ambassadors and kings, now have an account of pretenders.

"This makes me think of a young prince, prisoner at Strasburg, whose audacious attempts we were far from foreseeing. Louis Bonaparte is full of honour and good sense; it could only be the *ennui* of exile which inspired him with the foolish idea to war and be emperor in France. Poor young man! it was more pleasure to him to be a captive in his own country than free in a foreign land. When one has blood and a name like his, inaction is hard to bear. Had they but given him right of citizenship in France, he had perhaps been contented. We have often heard him say that all his ambition was to be a French soldier, and gain his grade in our army—that a regiment would suit him better than a throne. *Eh! mon Dieu!* it was not a kingdom he came to look for here, it was only a country.

"We have often known him to laugh at the royal education which had been given him. One day he gaily told us, that in his childhood his great pleasure was to water flowers, and that his governess, Madame de B——, fearing lest he should catch cold, had the watering-pots filled with warm water. 'My poor flowers,' said the prince, 'they never

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knew the freshness of the waters ! I was but an infant then, and still the precaution appeared ridiculous to me.' He never could speak of France without a tender feeling, and in this he resembles the Duke of Bordeaux. We were at Rome when we heard of the news of Talma's death ; every one began at once to deplore his loss, and to tell all they knew about the great actor, and speak of all the characters in which they had seen him. Whilst he was listening to us, who was then scarcely sixteen, he stamped his foot with impatience, and said, with tears in his eyes, ' To think that I am a Frenchman and have never seen Talma ! '

" They say that on the day of his appearance at Strasburg, Prince Louis, intoxicated by his first moment of success, despatched a courier to his mother to say he was master of Strasburg and about to march on Paris. Three days after he received in prison the answer of the Duchess of St. Leu, who, believing him to be entirely victorious, entreated him to preserve the royal family from the fury of his partisans, and to treat the king with the utmost possible respect. This shows us how far illusions can be carried among those who live far away from us, and that exiled princes are deceived as much as others."

To think he is a Frenchman and has not seen Talma ! What a touch of pathos that is, of true French pathos. He has lost a kingdom, an empire, but, above all, he has not seen Talma. Fancy the pretender, our pretender, dying at Rome, and saying on his deathbed that he dies unhappy at not having seen Garrick in " Abel Drugger ! " There would have been a universal grin through history at such a speech from such a man—but ours is not a country of equality ; acting is an amusement with us, and does not come within the domain of glory—but one can see these French people with that strange fantastic mixture of nature and affectation, exaggeration and simplicity, weeping not altogether sham tears over the actor's death—and a prince thinking it necessary to " *placer son petit mot* " on the occasion.

We have a " *petit mot*," too, for the Duke of Bordeaux, no doubt as authentic as that here attributed to the unlucky prisoner of Ham.

" A traveller just returned from Goritz recounts an anecdote regarding M. le Duc de Bordeaux, which is not without interest. The prince

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had invited several young men to ride, and every one admired his boldness and agility. Hedges and ditches—nothing stopped him. At last he came to a ravine, a sort of torrent, whereof the stream was large enough to make the prince pause for a moment. But he turned round smiling to his companions, and said ‘Now, gentlemen, this is the Rhine, let us pass into France;’ and so saying he plunged his horse into the torrent, and gained, not without difficulty, the opposite bank. When he was landed, he was aware of his own imprudence, for many of his companions were by no means so good horsemen as he. ‘Ah!’ said he, looking towards them, and speaking with his usual charming kindness, ‘how thoughtless I am! there is a bridge hard by;’ and he pointed out the bridge to his suite, and beckoned them to pass over by it. All returned, admiring the young prince’s courage still more perhaps than his presence of mind. To cross torrents on horseback is more glorious for oneself, but it is better to find a bridge for one’s friends.

Alas! stern reason will not confirm this chivalrous opinion of the Vicomte de Launay. Why is it more glorious to cross torrents on horseback than to go over bridges? To dance on a tight-rope—to lock oneself into a hot oven—to swallow half a score of scimitars, or to stand on one’s head on a church weathercock, would not even in France now-a-days be considered glorious, and so we deny this statement of the viscount’s altogether, as probably the Duke of Bordeaux would, should it ever come to his royal highness’s ears. But must we say it? this story, like many others in the book, that for instance, of the English knights at the Eglinton tournament breaking their lances in the first place, *and pasting them afterwards together with paper*—are, as we fancy, due to the invention of the writer rather than to the talk of the day, which he professes to chronicle. One of these queer tales we cannot refrain from giving.

“This,” says Madame de Girardin, “puts me in mind of the courier who had a wife at Paris, and another at Strasburg. *Was it a crime? No.*” (O delicious moralist!)

“And this puts me in mind of the bigamist courier who had a wife at Paris and another at Strasburg. Was it a crime? No; a faithful

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but alternate inhabitant of these two cities, has he not a right to possess a ménage in each? One establishment was not sufficient for him: his life was so regularly divided, that he passed two days in each alternate week at Paris and Strasburg. With a single wife he would have been a widower for the half of his time. In the first instance he had lived many years *uniquely married* at Paris, but he came soon bitterly to feel the inconvenience of the system. The care which his wife took of him at Paris made him find his solitude when at Strasburg too frightful. In the one place ennui and solitude, a bad supper and a bad inn. In the other, a warm welcome, a warm room, and a supper most tenderly served. At Paris all was pleasure: all blank loneliness at Strasburg.

"The courier of the mail interrogated his heart, and acknowledged that solitude was impossible to him, and reasoned within himself, that if marriage was a good thing, therefore there could not be too much of a good thing, therefore it became him to do a good thing at Strasburg as well as at Paris.

"Accordingly the courier married, and the secret of his second union was kept profoundly, and his heart was in a perpetual and happy vibration between the two objects of his affections. When on the road to Strasburg he thought of his fair Alsatian with her blue eyes and blushing cheeks; passed two days gaily by her side, the happy father of a family of little Alsacians, who smiled around him in his northern home. However one day he committed a rash act of imprudence. One of his Strasburg friends was one day at Paris, when the courier asked him to dine. The guest mistaking Caroline for the courier's sister, began talking with rapture of the blue-eyed Alsatian and the children at Strasburg; he said he had been at the wedding, and recounted the gaieties there. And so the fatal secret was disclosed to poor Caroline.

"She was very angry at first, but she was a mother, and the elder of her sons was thirteen years old. She knew the disgrace and ruin which would come upon the family in the event of a long and scandalous process at law, and thought with terror of the galleys—the necessary punishment of her husband, should his crime be made known. She had very soon arranged her plan. She pretended she had a sick relative in the country, and straightway set off for Strasburg, where she found Toinette, and told her all the truth. Toinette, too, was at first all for vengeance, but Caroline calmed her, showed her that the welfare of their children depended on the crime not being discovered, and that the galleys for life must be the fate of the criminal. And so these two women signed a sublime compact to forget their jealousies, and it was only a few hours before his death that their

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husband knew of their interview. A wheel of the carriage breaking, the mail was upset over a precipice; and the courier, dreadfully wounded, was carried back to Strasburg, where he died after several days of suffering. As he was dying he made his confession; 'My poor Toinette,' said he, 'pardon me. I have deceived thee. I was already married when I took you for a wife.' 'I know it,' said Toinette sobbing, 'don't plague yourself now, its pardoned long ago.' 'And who told you?' '*The other one.*' 'Caroline?' 'Yes, she came here seven years ago, and said you would be hanged were I to peach, and so I said nothing.' 'You are a good creature,' said the two-wived courier, stretching out his poor mutilated hand to Toinette; 'and so is the other one,' added he with a sigh; 'its hard to quit two such darlings as those. But the time's up now—my coach can't wait—go and bring the little ones that I may kiss them—I wish I had the others too. Heigh ho!'

"'But here they are!' cried the courier at this moment, and his two elder boys entered with poor Caroline, time enough to see him die. The children cried about him. The two wives knelt on each side, and he took a hand of each, and hoped that heaven would pardon him as those loving creatures had; and so the courier died.

"Caroline told François, her son, who had grown up, that Toinette was her sister-in-law, and the two women loved each other, and never quitted each other afterwards."

Here, however, our extracts must stop. But for the young lady, for whose profit they have been solely culled, we might have introduced half a score of others, giving the most wonderful glimpses into the character if not of all the Parisian population, at least of more than one-half of it—of the Parisian women. There is the story of the padded lady. If a duke or a prince came to her château, she sailed out to receive them as full-blown as a Circassian: if it was a dandy from Paris, she appeared of an agreeable plumpness: if only her husband and her old friends were present, she came to breakfast as meager as a skeleton. There is the story of the lady at her tambour or tapestry-frame, very much puzzled, counting the stitches necessary to work the Turk or the poodle-dog, on which she is engaged. *You* enter, says the Viscount de Launay, you press your suit; she is troubled, anxious; as you pour out your

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passion, what will she say—"O heavens! I love him—Alphonse, in pity leave me!" no such thing; she says, "Seven, eight, nine stitches of blue for the eye; three, four, six stitches of red for the lip, and so on." *You* are supposed to be the public, *she* the general Parisian woman. *You* seem to fall in love with *she*, as a matter of course—(see the former extract regarding the *femme passionnée*)—it can't be otherwise; it is as common as sleep or taking coffee for breakfast; it is the natural condition of men and wives—other men's wives. Well, every country has its customs; and married ladies who wish to be made love to, are married where they can have their will.

Then there is a delicious story about two old coquettes travelling together, and each acting youth to the other. Each writes home of the other, Madame de X. is charming, she has *been quite a mother to me*. Only women can find out these wonderful histories—women of the world, women of good company.

And is it so? Is it true that the women of Madame de Girardin's country, and of fashionable life, are the heartless, odious, foolish, swindling, smiling, silly, selfish creatures she paints them? Have they no sense of religious duty, no feeling of maternal affection, no principle of conjugal attachment, no motive except variety, for which they will simulate passion (it stands to reason that a woman who does not love husband and children, can love nobody) and break all law? Is this true—as every French romance that has been written time out of mind, would have us believe? Is it so common that Madame de Girardin can afford to laugh at it as a joke, and talk of it as a daily occurrence?—if so, and we must take the Frenchman's own word for it—in spite of all the faults, and all the respectability, and all the lord-worship, and all the prejudice, and all the intolerable dulness of Baker Street—*Miss* (the young and amiable English lady, before apostrophized) had much better marry in the Portman Square, than in the Place Vendome quarter.

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The titles of the two other works mentioned at the head of our article have been placed there as they have a reference to Parisian life, as well as the lively, witty, and unwise letters of M. la Vicomte de Launay. Unwise are the other named works too, that of the German and the Englishman, but it cannot be said that either of them, lays the least claim to the wit and liveliness of the gay pseudo-vicomte.

Those who will take the trouble to compare the two authors, Grant and Rellstab, will find in them a great similarity of sentiment, and a prodigious talent at commonplace; but it is not likely that many of the public will have the opportunity, or take the pains to make this important comparison. Rellstab is a Berlin cockney, with one of the largest bumps of wonder that ever fell to man. His facility at admiration may be imagined, when we state that at the very first page of his book he begins wondering at the velocity of the German Schnell post. He goes five miles an hour, and finds the breathless rapidity of the conveyance like "the uncertain bewilderment of a dream." He enters the Mallepost at Frankfort, and describes THE NEW CONSTRUCTION of those vehicles in the most emphatic manner, says that AT THE VERY MOST they take five minutes to change horses on the road, and that the horses go at A GALLOP. One can see his honest pale round face, peering out of the chaise window, and the wondering eyes glaring through the spectacles, at the dangers of the prodigious journey.

On arriving, he begins straightway to describe his bedroom, on the third floor, and the prices of other bedrooms. "My room," says he, "has an elegant alcove with an extraordinarily clean bed,—it is true, it is floored with titles instead of planks, but these are covered with carpets. A marble mantelpiece, a chest of drawers, a *secrétaire*, a marble table by the bed, three cushioned armchairs and three others form the furniture; and the room altogether has a *homish* and comfortable look."

As for the aspect of the streets, he finds that out at once.

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"The entrance into Paris through the Faubourg St. Martin is like the Köpnicker Street in Berlin, *although the way from the barrier to the post is not so long as in Paris;*" and then Mr. Rellstab details with vast exactness, his adventures in the yard of the messagerie, and the dexterity of an individual, who with little assistance hoisted his luggage and that of his friend on to his brawny shoulders, and conveyed them from the carriage to the ground without making the slightest claim upon their respective purses. The hotel, and the extraordinary furniture of his apartment, described as above, he is ready to sally with us into the streets.

"We proceeded first," he says, "through the Passage du Panorama. 'Passage,' being the name given to such thoroughfares, is made for the convenience of circulation in the different quarters of the towns, are roofed over with glass, paved with granite or asphalte, and are lined on either side by splendidly furnished shops (we translate literally, being unwilling to add to or take from the fact, that all passages are thus appointed). Here I had the first opportunity of observing narrowly the taste displayed in the arrangement of these latter. Nothing, not even the plainest article for sale, is arrayed otherwise than with the most particular neatness. Many shops surprised me by their system of combination. In one, for instance, devoted to the sale of such articles as tea, coffee, and the like, we do not only see tea, coffee, and chocolate, all neatly laid out, each with its price attached to it, but also the various apparatus for the consumption of such articles; teacups and saucers, teapots and tea strainers, as also utensils of a similar nature for the preparation of coffee and chocolate. * * I consider it a most excellent arrangement, that to every article its price is attached. The stranger who cannot judge of the price of an article, will often decline making inquiry, lest the demand exceed his opinion of the value—but if he sees what is the price, he is much more likely to buy, as he will know whether his purse will enable him to indulge his desire." Mr. Rellstab then goes

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into a short disquisition on the price of hats, which he finds are cheaper than in his own country.

Our author has not yet got into the streets of Paris, and we begin to question whether our love of his company will allow us to attend him there. However, we can make a short cut, and come upon him again as he is passing very slowly along the Boulevard des Italiens, for he has not got farther. He has just remarked, we find, that a very vast proportion of the people are in mourning, and accounted for it by informing us that ceremony obliges mourning to be worn a long time.

“ The boulevards draw a half circle round the heart of Paris, just as the walks round Frankfort and Leipzig surround the whole of the more ancient parts of these towns. But the half circle here is nearly five miles in length ; their appearance is more town-like than garden-like ; they rather resemble our Lime Tree walk (in Berlin), only that the passage for carriages is in the centre, whilst two rows of wide-spreading trees line a promenade on either side.”

Here comes a minute description of the paving, in which we cannot suppose all our readers interested.

“ The general impression given by the buildings on the boulevards resembles that given by the Ditch (Graben) of Vienna, though to be sure, the construction of the houses differs considerably from that in Vienna, and still more from that in Berlin. None of the lower floors appear to be occupied by private individuals. They seem all to be made of avail as shops or coffee houses ; even the first and second stories are often similarly employed, and at enormous rents.”

M. Rellstab soon after beholds “ the Vendôme pillar with its colossal statue of Napoleon, in the perspective of a broad noble street, the Rue de la Paix, a shadowy form,” he says, “ which, as by magic, darkened the present and brought forward, in its murky light, the mighty past.”

This and the next sentence, in which he makes history speak to him and his friend, are of the finest order of fine writing. He does not retail what history says to him, but assures us that the few moments which he passed beneath the pillar produced

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"emotions which are indescribable." On a carnival day he comes upon the spot whence Fiéschi fired his hell-machine on the 28th July, 1835. The poor fellow's terror breaks out in the most frantic poetry, "Paris," shrieks he, "is like Ætna. In the too-strong air of its with-plants-and-flowers-luxuriously-decked ground (his epithets are always tremendous), the keenest nosed dogs lose the scent, and in its wondrous environs, the eye finds itself wandering and lost in such an immeasurable labyrinth of beauty, that one forgets how the glowing lava heaves below, and how every moment the thundering hell, in the very midst of the Paradise, may tear open its mouth.

"On, on!"

And "on" he rushes, but this perhaps is the richest passage of eloquence in the book.

What can one say more about him? Good introductions and the name of a writer suffice to introduce M. Rellstab to one or two characters of note. He calls upon them, and finds them, in some instances, not at home, and going or returning in a hired cabriolet, he makes use of the opportunity to print the tariff and propensities of these conveyances. He goes to the opera and is squeezed; he attends the carnival balls and is shocked; he lives in Paris and wishes himself back at Berlin. There is a particularizing throughout the book which is amazing, and to an English reader most comic. But we live amongst commonplace, and we like to read of what we daily see. M. Rellstab's book will tell the reader what he already knows, and if he learns nothing new from it, he will be able to flatter himself on its perusal with the idea—"I too could have been an author."

And, finally, with respect to the work of the celebrated Mr. Grant. The *Morning Herald* says, "it will find its way into every library, and be read by every family"; the *Metropolitan* remarks that "they are able and comprehensive in plan, and nothing could be better executed"; the *Jersey Times* declares (and this we admit) "that no living author could have presented

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us with such a picture of Paris and its people"; and *Ainsworth's Magazine* is of opinion "that Mr. Grant's volume will supersede the trashy Guide-book of Galignani." Let us trust that these commendations have had their effect, and that Mr. Grant has sold a reasonable number of his volumes.

But for the honour of England, and as this Review is read in France, we are bound to put in a short protest against the above dicta of the press, and humbly to entreat French readers *not* to consider Mr. Grant as the representative of English literature, nor to order the book which the *Morning Herald* declares no English family will be without. If we are all to have it, let us, at any rate, keep the precious benefit to ourselves, nor permit a single copy of "Paris and its People" to get out of the kingdom. *Il faut laver* (the words are those of his majesty the Emperor Napoleon) *son linge sale en famille*. Let us keep Mr. Grant's works in the same privacy, or the English man-of-letters will get such a reputation on the continent as he will hardly be anxious to keep.

English families may, if they please, purchase Mr. Grant's book in place of Galignani's "trashy Guide-book," which is the very best guide-book that we know of in any language, which is the work of scholars and gentlemen, the compilation of which must have necessitated a foundation of multifarious historical, architectural, and antiquarian reading, (such as Mr. Grant never *could* have mastered, for he knows no language, living or dead, not even the English language, which he pretends to write,) and which, finally, contains for half the price, four or five times the amount of matter to be found in these volumes, which every English family is to read. Let us be allowed in a Foreign Review to make a protest against the above sentiments, for the sake of the literary profession.

Mr. Grant spent some time in the months of July and August in Paris; he may have been there six, or possibly three weeks. With this experience his qualifications for writing a book on Paris were as follows: he did not know a syllable of

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the language ; he is not acquainted with the civilized habits of any other country ; his stupidity passes all bounds of belief ; his ignorance is without a parallel that we know of, in professional literature ; he has a knack of blundering so extraordinary that he cannot be trusted to describe a house-wall ; and with these qualities he is said to write a book which is to be read by all English families, and to ruin Galignani's trashy publication. It is too bad : for the critic, however good-natured, has, after all, a public to serve as well as an author ; and has no right, while screening the dulness and the blunders of a favourite wit or blockhead, to undervalue the honest labours and cultivated abilities of meritorious scholars and gentlemen.

Mr. Grant begins to blunder at the first line of his book, and so continues to the end. He disserts upon the gutters in the streets, the windows in the houses, the cabs and their fares, the construction of the omnibuses ; and by a curious felicity of dulness, is even in these matters entirely untrustworthy. He says that *Chateaubriand* is a republican and a member of the Chamber of Deputies, he visits the Madeline and the Citié, he calls Julius Cæsar "that distinguished writer," and a nose "an organ which it is needless to name." He discovers that the Palais Royale is the place to which all the aristocracy of France resorts ; he sees "the most elegant ladies of the land sitting alongside of dirty drivers in hack-cabriolets" ; and dining at an eating-house for thirty sous, pronounces his meal to be the height of luxury, and declares that the gentry of Paris are in the habit of so dining. Does the *Morning Herald* seriously recommend every "English family" to do likewise ? We put this as a home question.

ANGLETERRE.

By ALFRED MICHIELS.

THE works of the author of this wonderful book have been hitherto unknown to us : and we are curious to know the opinion of the French critics concerning him. Has the volume called "Angleterre" been received gravely as an authentic narrative? Does the French public believe its statements, and gather matter out of its ingenious pages corroborative of its hatred for our perfidious nation? Do the *National* and the *Siècle* quote from it with approval, and point out the opinions of the "homme consciencieux, esprit distingué, écrivain sérieux, M. Alfred Michiels," as capable of directing his countrymen in their judgment of England and its institutions? Indeed they are ignorant enough to believe him : and of all the civilised countries in Europe, France is perhaps the only one where such a book *could* be written, or published, or credited. The narrative of that distinguished foreigner Hajji Baba, of Ispahan, is almost as correct, and the travels of the famous Hanoverian Baron, Monsieur de Münchausen, scarcely less authentic.

When the great Michiels came among us does not appear. The interesting date of that event our author keeps back with studious obscurity. Nor does he appear to have seen anybody of note in this country. He says he lived in a boarding-house, and his "Angleterre" consists of Boulogne, London, Richmond, Hampton Court, Windsor, and—Bethnal Green. Regarding all these places he has drawn much information out of the guide-books, the origin of which learning he does not

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acknowledge, and adds reflections of his own far more curious and valuable than any facts which he has gathered from the various works of previous travellers which he has consulted.

History is indeed Michiels' forte: and he is happier than most French travellers in being, as he says, a master of our language. He had known it since his earliest youth. He had perused a great number of British authors, and often had dreamt of the "land of minstrels," and the moment he put his foot on shore he resembled (in his private opinion) "a man who had fallen in love with a woman at the sight of her portrait, who had mused in ecstasy over her image: who seeks her trembling with hope, and falls down panting at her feet the moment he has found her abode." Was ever country so complimented by a Frenchman before? Happy is ours to have so passionate an admirer. It has been pronounced by the poet to be a special benefit to mankind to be able "to see ourselves as others see us." Let us accompany awhile this accomplished M. Michiels through his peregrinations, and hear the remarks that he makes regarding our manners and institutions.

These opinions are exceedingly curious. Arrived at Boulogne, and before he catches sight of England, our sentimental traveller begins to point morals at us, and gives us some useful lessons apropos of Buonaparte's pillar,—that object which eight hundred cockneys weekly are now in the habit of visiting:

"On the 15th of August, 1804," says Michiels, "the fête day of Napoleon, a hundred thousand men were here assembled under the orders of Marshal Soult. They were formed in a semicircle, in the midst of which the throne of the emperor was raised, and over it the banner of the nations which his genius and French intrepidity had conquered. All hearts beat: a thousand visions of glory traversed the mind. Buonaparte was about to found the legion of honour. *Two thousand drummers saluted him*, and the fête began. * * The menaced shores of England trembled no doubt when the breeze brought to her the murmurs of this enthusiastic crowd, when the shouts of the legionaries, mingled with the plaudits of the expiring waves, reached the strand. The army desired that a monument should for ever recall the remembrance of so great a ceremony. It raised *half* a column, not

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having time to construct the capital. The pillar was terminated in 1841, by the orders of Louis Philippe. Elevated on the summit of the rock it looks towards the hostile island, and *seems to give it a perpetual lesson.*"

A man who commences a book in this way is pretty sure to prove an amusing companion, and we felt at once that his work must be read with respectful interest. Each of these brief sentences in which our author describes the above pillar is of vast eloquence surely. All hearts beat. Napoleon founded the legion of honour, and—and *two thousand drummers saluted him.* The army, desirous to erect a monument to perpetuate the remembrance of the ceremony, built half a column—because they had not time to do any more. And there it stands—for what purpose, in Heaven's name?—*to give England a perpetual lesson.*

That is a sly satire of Michiels. It is a lesson to England certainly; but it is a lesson to France too, which the sly moraliser would doubtless have his countrymen take to heart. It seems to say—O England, let this monument teach you how to regard us. We did all we could to frighten you. We went every length to show our ill-will. We bullied and threatened to our utmost. But we could do nothing and so we came away; erecting this monument as a token of the triumph which we had achieved, and leaving it as a lesson to you in future ages; that sort of lesson which Canute read the waves, when, according to the legend, he ran away from them, and left his chair behind. And do not let any good-natured foreign reader quarrel with us for mentioning a disagreeable subject: it is not *our* moral, be it remembered, but that of our traveller, Alfred Michiels.

He goes on musing from his mound upon the vast ocean before him, and stating great and wonderful truths concerning it. "Nations die—empires crumble—races perish—but Time, which spares nothing else, never stops the music (*melopœa*) of these eternal waves." They are also dangerous. "Voracious

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monsters inhabit them, and menace the imprudent who confide themselves to their waters. Vegetables and animals people their solitude, and frighten the spirit by their singular forms and heteroclit character. He thought the day would never rise again, and that death and solitude were about to take possession of the globe. Before such a sight any man, however small his sensibility, would have had difficulty to refrain from tears."—Indeed he is a noble specimen of a French cockney, and it is fine to picture to oneself the image of Alfred Michiels waiting by the side of the ocean; that is if he ever did visit the sea-side—about which we shall express a few opinions presently.

He does not state whether he cried or not; but night fell, it was time to go into Boulogne; and in ten minutes after he reached that city, he was on board the Harlequin steamer, treading that menacing wave which he had just contemplated with such profound emotion. The night was clear—the stars bright overhead, did not yet shine bright enough to "illumine the depths of the sea," and "the wheels of the vessel," Michiels says, in a great image, "*struck in obscurity the black face of ocean*"—boxed the ears of the Negro Neptune.

The consequences of such an insult to the god are but too obvious. Michiels was sick. He was seized, he says, "with astonishing promptitude"—and lay inanimate until morning. "There are very humiliating things in this world," adds poor Alfred, moaning out of his crib.

But with morning life was restored to Michiels. He attributes his recovery to the re-appearance of that sun whose departure he had announced the day before as likely to be eternal; but the probability is, that it was because Michiels now found himself in calm water in the mouth of the Thames, that he was no longer in a "humiliating" position. Other mariners of his sort have experienced, under like circumstances, a similar relief. Almost all the travellers came upon deck, and an Englishman, "about forty years old," (the circumstantial

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nature of the evidence is extremely interesting,) “cordially presented” to Michiels a *gourd* full of brandy; which offer Alfred accepted. We can see him crawling out of the fore cabin and fixing his pale lips upon the Englishman’s “gourd”—a vegetable which our islanders are always in the habit of carrying.

He left his baggage at the Custom-house, and began, forthwith, wandering about the city, that darling London, his passion for which he has already described. The first thing he naturally saw was the Monument of Fish Street Hill, on which he proceeds to narrate the history of the famous fire of 1666: from that he branches off to an agreeable dissertation on the plague; which leads him to Old St. Paul’s, whence he passes to the existing edifice, of which Alfred has rather a contemptuous opinion. “Wren,” he says, “was not a man of genius, he was a poor creature, a blind copyist, who fancied that he was producing pure forms, whereas he only produced ‘monsters without character, without value, without harmony, and without vital force.’” *His* claims at any rate are disposed of: and the architect of St. Paul’s and Greenwich has got his deserts. However, he is not always so severe; Michiels, cool with regard to the cathedral, admires *Guildhall* very much, and finds it of a remarkably pure Gothic architecture.

We have before signalised a practice of the modern French tourists (Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas especially), who, the instant they arrive at the place, proceed to rob the guide-books wholesale, and to transfer the information contained in those careful and useful, but not rare volumes to their own pages. Now if this sort of robbery be considered as a proof of skill—there is perhaps no man on record who has robbed so much as Michiels, and who finds such opportunities to pass off page upon page of his borrowed lore. Thus, in one instant, still ill with the “humiliations” of the voyage, and with drops from the revivifying “gourd” of the Englishman still on his beard and mustaches, Michiels falls to with his archæological

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talk, and the city, the Mansion House, the Lord Mayor, and the dinner to the allied sovereigns, are described before he is even settled in his inn. The historical disquisitions, we, in our discussion of Michiels, shall for the most part omit. They are known to us ; or if not known, to be learned with ease : it is Michiels personally who interests us, the elegant traveller, the enthusiast, the wise and honest commentator upon things which he has really seen and deeply meditated upon.

In speaking of the appearance of the city, he pays some very high and deserved compliments to the *sewers* of London. "The waters of the skies above," says he, "moisten its streets; no impure streams are poured on them from any part. But—and probably from the great fire of London—the town still retains the physiognomy of a city that has been burned. Seen from St. Paul's, the town has, so to speak, a *scrofulous* look : retaining the appearance which the fire impressed upon it at the most perilous period of its history, like those individuals whom a horrid evil has stricken in their youth, and who bear the tragic imprint of it for ever." This is quite novel and elegant. London has never yet been looked upon in a scorbutic point of view : nor, seeing that all the houses, and edifices built by the wretched Wren, are new, could any but a man of Michiels' genius have detected upon them the tragic imprint of the old fire.

At night, however, he speaks of the city with a more tender spirit.

"Past midnight the view of London is much more agreeable. When the inhabitants are a prey to slumber, and the clatter of the vehicles and the noise of the multitude are heard no more ; when the chimneys have ceased to cast up their vapours—the sky, veiled until then, displays its radiant dome. At the same time the soul purifies itself in contemplating the brilliancy of the stars. The eye plunges into immensity, as if to seek for the God whose grandeur it recounts ! How brilliant every thing is above yonder—how tranquil ! How every thing flatters the imagination, and speaks a poetic language to the heart ! The Tower, too, has been embellished by the change. The two ranks of

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candelabra along the pavements shine without any thing to interrupt their splendour: they really compose an illumination which seems prolonged indefinitely. Each hotel has a lamp fixed over the gate, which casts its brilliancy without as well as on the interior arcade. From distance to distance a *watchman* circulates the protecting spirit of the place: no fear troubles the spirit, nor disquiets the reverie. The calm, the solitude, the darkness, which envelops them above and around, gives the monuments an imposing expression which they do not possess during the day. Here and there a tardy lamp is shining—it illumines the dying man's bed, the speculator's window, or the *delights of mutual happiness*. What dark projects and guilty schemes has this night interrupted! What hatred, what treasure, what brutal errors sleep in those heads now lying low in temporary death, or in the shape of dark dreams visit them! Ah, if all men could but rise one morning burning with a sacred passion for love and truth! If they could wake and find in their hearts only charitable sentiments, sage principles, and glorious desires! how the evils which at present infest life would be lessened or diverted! how noble and delightful would be the lot destined for our race so worn by suffering and care! "

The passage about "a sainted love of truth," is above all very fine. When a man is writing down his own vocation, you may be sure he is sincere. How many copies of this book (Heaven bless us!) would be sold, if a sainted love of truth actuated all Michiels' fellow-creatures? And is it not praiseworthy of a man to write against "treasons, hatred, and stupid errors," when we have him presently discoursing in the following fashion?

"I had resolved to walk for several days about London as chance should lead me, without any other purpose than to observe the general aspect of men and things. Even the hotel in which I was lodged offered me, at the onset, some subject for remark. It was a boarding-house, to which, however, all the world was not welcome, but to which a presentation was necessary. This precaution already gave me a proof of the general want of confidence in England. *Au reste* the house was small and snug, and well carpeted from head to foot. Two old English-women kept it, and, with the exception of the kitchen-work, two Irish-women performed the servants' work. Never, surely, were domestics more wretched. The *hatred which their nation awakens among their oppressors*, perpetually brought down upon these poor girls their mistress's anger: a tempest of scolding, often accompanied by brutality,

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poured on them from evening till night. Ill provided with bed, board, or clothes, they were learning to understand what human justice and charity are. They did all in their power to satisfy their despots, and could not succeed : I doubt whether the whole year through a single kind word was addressed to them. They had so profound a feeling of their distress, that they ended by making no reply to the insults and ill-treatment heaped upon them ; they could weep no longer. Why weep, indeed, over such hopeless misfortune !

"I must confess the poor girls were not pretty : but still they inspired me with a sovereign pity. I love the Gaelic nation where they were born, and of which they exemplified to me the misery. The wrecks of a race once powerful and covering all Europe, it is closing now in the bosom of desolation a glorious and a painful career. The Normans and Saxons who trample them under foot never give them a moment's rest : they plunge them into that frozen mud into which the Florentine poet exiles traitors ; each day they are thrust a degree lower, and if they make an attempt to escape from the abyss, their tormentors put a knife at their throats, infected with every deadly poison. Ah ! why cannot a nation expire like an individual ? The agonies of Ireland would then at last come to an end.

"And yet in spite of the triple malediction which weighs her down, Ireland continues to produce great men : she holds up her head against her cruel rival, and disputes with her the triumphs of glory. It seems as if she wanted to render her rival's injustice and tyranny more conspicuous. She has always had a harp for her emblem—formerly she embroidered it on her banners, and used it to sing her victories. Alas ! she has only sorrows now to sing, and the wind, as it passes through the magic chords, only awakens from them the notes of despair.

"Whenever I spoke of these poor slaves, my hostesses contented themselves by saying, 'They are Irishwomen !' as if their nationality justified all crimes that were committed."

The two victims of British tyranny in this exclusive establishment, honoured by the residence of Michiels, affected him greatly by singing a certain song, entitled, he says, the "Two Guardian Angels," a national melody, by turns sad and lively, passing alternately from the tones of menace to those of frightful despair. One of the guardian angels, Alfred says, counselled resignation, tears and prayers ; whereas the other rallied the nation for its tranquillity, excited it to carnage, and doomed it to endless affliction, if it drew not from its sheath the vengeful

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claymore. Has any one ever heard of this poem and the angels? It is quite clear which of the guardians Michiels would be for following, for the young hero breaks out in the following noble strain concerning them.

"O ancient Ireland, old sister of Gaul! listen to the song of thine exterminating angel! remain no longer motionless as the statue of desolation, wave in the sun thy intrepid glaive—that sword of which the brilliancy used to frighten thy enemies of old. Be not lulled to sleep by vain harangues, by judicial subtleties,—the ways of diction are not the paths of independence. For a people that would free itself the roaring of cannon is the most eloquent of language—the sword and the grape-shot the most persuasive of means. Do you fancy that you can convince or mollify England? Think you she will come and file your chains and say, 'Let us embrace?' Never was folly equal to this. What? publicans weep for repentance and release their prey! the thing was never heard of. A rhetorician deliver millions of men? it never has, it never can be heard of. Every day of delay prepares for you a year of servitude: in the midst of the fine protests that people are reciting to you, the Normans take possession: troops and ships of war cover your soil, and watch with lighted matches along your coasts. Their barks take possession of your lakes and rivers, so that neither earth, nor ocean, nor the waters which lave them, can afford you a retreat. O ancient Ireland, listen to the song of thy destroying angel! Justice and truth are proscribed upon the globe: they only flourish in the blood of martyrs, rust in the blood of oppressors. Rouse thee—the world regards thee. If thou art to die, die the death of the brave, and not the ignoble death which seizes thee by the entrails: be not starved to death, as the wolves of Albion by the English hounds. Let thy men struggle to the last sigh: let thy women next take their place; and thy children succeed them. Let the drum never cease to roar, and the trumpet to peal—let an immense, eternal battle rage on thy fields. At least thou wilt have caused thy rival to commit the greatest political assassination whereof history has remembrance.

"But thou art not marked with the seal of reprobation: thou canst vanquish and purge thine isle of the Norman race—the hypocrite race! Greece had six times less inhabitants, she had been chained for centuries, she was as poor as thou art. See what she has done, and judge what thou too may'st do! What fearest thou to lose? Why hesitate? Strike, strike! and count upon the God whom thou hast not abandoned, upon thine own valour, thine own genius, and on fraternal nations, who will thrill with hope and joy!"

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Is not this a lesson (like the pillar at Boulogne) of what some Frenchmen would do for us if they could?—Not that it is meant to introduce the great Michiels as a representative of his country; but let any impartial man say, is that amateur incendiarism uncommon in France? We have had lately specimens of it published under very high authority, and with far different talent. We have had a king's son, disclaiming, to be sure, all intentions of hostility, yet suggesting plans of invasion, the facility of burning our unarmed towns, the ease with which our merchantmen might be assailed and sunk—all which points, if discussed, might surely have been debated in private. Princes at peace with each other need sign their names to no such document; if a prince of the English royal house had published a paper showing the practicability of annoying the French coast—would not all the French empire have rung with indignation at the insult? . . . But in the meanwhile we are forgetting our friend Michiels bellowing out “Frappe! frappe!” and giving the Irish the agreeable opportunity of allowing their rivals to “commit the greatest political assassination, of which history shall retain the remembrance”—the greatest, including La Vendée of course. But even a Michiels should beware when he talks of “fraternal nations thrilling with hope” at the thought of the convulsion: our great traveller's known love of truth and justice should keep his revolutionary instinct quiet.

From war he passes agreeably to love, stating in his pleasant Gallican way, “Let us hate our neighbours as much as we please, their wives and daughters demand *very different sentiments from us.*” Murder the men, says our Michiels, but be kind to the women—the one sentiment is quite as flattering as the other; as graceful, as modest, and as honourable. Here is an account of part of an adventure which occurred to some lucky friend of Michiels' at the Haymarket.

“On going to the theatre, one is dazzled by the enchanting faces which may be seen on every side. It is only in Italy that similar

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assemblages of persons can be found. *A magnetic fluid inundates as it were the theatre.* One of my friends lately told me of an adventure of this kind which shows what seductions the fair daughters of the three kingdoms exercise. Standing up in the pit of the Haymarket he turned his eyes from box to box, from tier to tier. Charming eyes, brilliant faces, mouths created for love, intoxicated him with admiration. All of a sudden a young lady came and sat close to the balustrade of the lower row of boxes: two men, her brother and her husband probably, placed themselves near her. As soon as she appeared the other spectatresses were eclipsed: not one could bear comparison with her; for if they were brilliant—she was divine. She possessed that perfect sort of beauty which awakens a *religious sentiment* and softens the soul, as the magnificences of nature—you perceive in them more lovely signs of the creative hand, a purer ray of the celestial light! Woe to those whom such objects inspire with a hopeless idolatry! One cannot love them with a feeble love. They excite desire as violent and as unconquerable as fanaticism. Passion then loses its habitual character: one would say that the senses formed no part of this attachment, that it is the soul alone which speaks—and wishes to embrace in a magic union the immortal spirit under its passing form. Such a passion will brave all perils—what are misfortunes, agony itself, compared to the ineffable pleasure it demands?

"No one feels this emotion more keenly than my friend. In consequence, far from resisting the sudden transports, which now seized him, he gave way to them without reserve. His eyes firm fixed upon the wonderful stranger: he examined, scrutinised her different charms, and penetrated himself with their electric influence. The play began; but it was impossible for him to see anything. His imagination would allow him to see nothing but the fair Englishwoman, and he incessantly turned his glances towards her. Tired of the equivocal position, he turned round altogether, and sat with his back to the stage, and his face turned towards the young lady. He had some fears lest he should displease her, and cause her to leave the theatre: but on this point he was speedily reassured. He seemed to say to her *I sacrifice the play to you—you in my eyes are the most interesting of chefs-d'œuvres.* She understood this mute eulogium, and received it with favour. It was *delicate* and manifestly sincere."

"Delicate" is just the word—nothing could be more delicate, surely, than for a man in the pit to turn his back upon the audience, to stare a lady full in the face in the box above him; and we can fancy how pleased she would be by this graceful

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attention. How pleased also would her husband and her brother be (those individuals who are stated to have accompanied the lady in question), by the politeness of the French gentleman in the pit. Modest French gentleman! though he will have all us men handed to the Irish executioner: the ladies he will preserve to gratify other elegant tastes of his own! He confirms it. As he looks round the theatre at the pretty Englishwomen "he is inundated with a magnetic influence!"—chaste French gentleman! He compares the feelings of desire which are agitating his noble soul to a *religious sentiment*—pious French gentleman! No, indeed, there is no man in this world *but* a Frenchman, who can think and feel and write in this way.

How this delightful adventure ended, there is little need to say. The English lady was of course captivated by the graces of her French admirer—they always are. The two gentlemen who accompanied her, her brother and husband, were too stupid to remark his elegant manner of paying her attention, or too cowardly to punish him. My lady dropped her fan in the lobby—a fan "with arms and a family title" upon it; Michiels' friend carried it home the next day, and triumphed over the lady of the boxes—indeed Michiels says, "Many daughters of lords, of counts, of dukes, of barons, of marquises, *sont séduites par leurs valets.*" He knows it, the honest creature; his experience of London has proved it to him; and speaking of a class of our women still more degraded than the daughters of the nobility above-mentioned, he says, "Je doute qu'il en existe d'aussi belles dans aucun pays du monde, et l'on seroit tenté de leur dire: Ah! si vous étiez pures, comme l'on vous adorerait! Si vous n'étiez pas vénales, de quels sacrifices ne paierait-on pas votre *possession.*" Noble French moralist! he wishes to see women pure that he may pervert them; and only regrets that they are lost already, because he has not the opportunity to be the first to debauch them!

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Now let us venture to hint that this person, who knows so much of the manners of the ladies of England, never spoke to one ; that he never saw them or the country in which they live, or the select boarding-house which he pretends to have inhabited. There is not a word in this book which looks as if it were the description of a scene actually witnessed by the writer. There is not a word of description which might not have been borrowed from a guide-book or two, such as the author might easily procure at the public library, where he has the privilege of sitting, and whence he can send his pure imagination travelling. The man tells lies so audaciously that his very statement of having been in England may be discredited, simply because he himself has advanced it. He describes the misery of Bethnal Green (a clever paper by M. Léon Faucher, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* has probably inspired him), and by way of authenticating his narrative, Michiels says he gave a poor beggar whom he met *a double shilling*. That is a lie. He goes to Hampton Court, and quitting the picture-gallery there *when night begins to fall*, he goes to an inn, "of which the gothic gables and multiplied windows" tempted him, and is conducted to "a bed of the fourteenth century with its daïs, and its panels, and its open columns." These two are lies. In the morning a minstrel comes and sings to him, "accompanying himself on an ancient black guitar," a ballad in five-and-forty stanzas, beginning :

" There was a knight was drunk with wine
A riding along the way, sir."

The whole ballad is to be found in "Percy's Relics." This story also is a lie. He goes to Eton, where he finds a professor who declares himself to be the author of the most popular book in England, "The Memoirs of Punch," and editor of the "Letters of Cicero to Atticus." The popular author had received orders from all the princes in Europe—and wore them at his button-hole. This is the last story in the book, and a lie too.

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There is no use in looking for polite phrases and qualifying otherwise a book which is as gross and disgusting an imposture as ever was pressed upon the incredulity of Frenchmen. With which compliment, and hoping that his own countrymen will notice him as he merits, we will take leave of *Alfred Michiels*.

APPENDIX.

TITLES OF THE VARIOUS WORKS REVIEWED IN THE PRECEDING ESSAYS, ALL OF WHICH APPEARED IN THE "FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW."

Essay No. I.—The Rhine, by VICTOR HUGO, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for April, 1842.

Le Rhin, lettres à un ami, par VICTOR HUGO (Letters from the Rhine), Paris, 1842.

Essay No. II.—The German in England, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for July, 1842.

Mittheilungen aus dem Reisetagebuche eines Deutschen Naturforschers: England (Extracts from the Travelling Journal of a German Naturalist: England), Basle, 1842.

Essay No. III.—Celebrated Crimes, by ALEXANDRE DUMAS, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for October, 1842.

Crimes Célèbres (Celebrated Crimes), by ALEXANDRE DUMAS, Paris, 1841.

Essay No. IV.—Letters from Paris, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for January, 1843.

Briefe aus Paris, VON KARL GUTZKOW (Letters from Paris, by CHARLES GUTZKOW), Leipzig, 1842.

Essay No. V.—Georg Herwegh's Poems, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for April, 1843.

APPENDIX.

Gedichte eines Lebendigen, mit einer Dedikation an den Verstorbenen (Poems of a Living Man, with a Dedication to the Dead), Zweite-Auflage, Zurich and Winterthur, 1841-2.

Essay No. VI.—English History and Character on the French Stage, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for July, 1843.

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Les Mystères de Paris (The Mysteries of Paris), par EUGÈNE SUE, 6 vols., Paris, 1843.

Essay No. IX.—French Romancers on England, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for October, 1843.

Le Bananier, par FRÉDÉRIC SOULIÉ, Paris, 1843.

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Essay No. X.—New Accounts of Paris, *Foreign Quarterly Review* for January, 1844.

1. *Lettres Parisiennes*, par MADAME EMILE DE GIRARDIN (VICOMTE DE LAUNAY). Parisian Letters by DELPHINE DE GIRARDIN, under the pseudonym of the VICOMTE DE LAUNAY, Paris, 1843.
2. *Paris in Frühjahr*, 1843, VON L. RELLSTAB, Leipzig, 1844.
3. Paris and its People, by the Author of "Random Recollections of the House of Commons," London, 1843.

Essay No. XI.—*Angleterre*. *Foreign Quarterly Review* for July, 1844.

Angleterre, par ALFRED MICHIELS (England, by A. MICHIELS), Paris, Coquebert, 1844.

THE RHINE.

TOWARDS 1840, four celebrated authors—Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Gérard de Nerval and Frédéric Soulié—left Paris severally to visit the Rhine.

To Victor Hugo it seemed that the hour had come to undertake the social mission of which he had dreamed; to Alexandre Dumas, whose sparkling "Impressions de Voyage" in Switzerland, and in the south of France, were in every hand, it occurred that as he must "do" the Rhine sometime he might as well see it while the eyes of his countrymen were eagerly watching its right bank; to Gérard de Nerval, who was fond of wandering, but who always felt the need to attach himself to someone, it seemed a happy idea to join Dumas at Frankfort. As for Soulié, his journey was undertaken for the edification of the readers of the *Journal des Débats*, he having a contract to

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forward feuilletons to it on Germany and the Germans, at so much a line.

Of these four men, the first of whom was a poet, the second a *vulgarizer*,* the third a dreamer, and the fourth a man of the world, it may be said that the dreamer was the only one who came home understanding the people among whom he travelled. Hugo returned as ignorant of the Germans as when he started; Dumas' least idea was to study them; Soulié took care to see nothing which he could not turn into "copy" such as his editor wanted; while Gérard de Nerval contrived, no one knows how, not only to understand what he saw, but to divine what he did not see. Hugo wrote a marvellously picturesque and poetic book from the literary point of view, and a mischievous one from the political. Dumas with his usual good fortune gathered up, wherever he went, a rich treasury of legend, history and good stories, and dressing them up in his own inimitable way, and interspersing personal adventures, turned out three delightful volumes. Gérard distilled into a comparatively few pages the essence of Germany. Soulié by a tissue of absurdities provoked the hilarity of the Germans without disturbing the equanimity of the readers of the *Débats*.

Of the four travellers, Hugo was most probably the only one to be disappointed. It is true that he was the most ambitious. When in 1842 he published his "Letters on the Rhine" as the result of his journey,† he was already the author of "Hernani," "Le Roi s'amuse," "Ruy Blas," "Notre Dame de Paris," "Les Feuilles d'Automne," "Les Chants du Crépuscule," "Les Voix Intérieures," and "Les Rayons et les Ombres;" in 1841 the Academy, in giving him its vacant chair, had adopted as its own the cause for which he and his followers had fought,

* NOTE.—"Hugo and Lamartine are poets; I am a vulgarizer."—A. DUMAS.

† NOTE.—Thackeray's review is of course of the first edition. To the second, published in 1845, Hugo added fourteen letters on Worms, Mannheim, Heidelberg, &c., &c.

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and even Victor Hugo could scarcely hope for a greater literary success than he had already gained. No, his object in going to the Rhine was to point out a way and to bring back a message to his countrymen; and incidentally to find the materials for a grand mediæval drama. The message was but coldly received, and the drama "Les Burgraves," splendid as literature, was such a failure on the boards that Hugo never consented to stage a play again.

Thackeray clearly had no prepossessions in favour of Hugo. His "Ah! in what disguise can a Frenchman hide himself, and is there any corner in the world in which we cannot detect him and laugh at him?" was only playful sarcasm; but a performance of "Marion Delorme" had sickened him, and, indeed, evidence is not wanting that Thackeray did not care for any of the great leaders of the romantic school, nor indeed for the school itself. He described Hugo as an Atlas bearing a bladder, and he let no opportunity slip for poking fun at him. Still, Thackeray's national prepossessions apart, he was not consciously unfair to the author of "Hernani." When he was struck by a fine passage he translated it, when he met another so full of poetry that he could not trust his powers of translation to do it justice, he copied it out. Hugo's bombast and occasional grossness were offensive to him, and his prophetic utterances seemed to him fantastic and absurd, as indeed they were, but he saw no reason to depreciate his splendid style, his poetic imagery.

The world has long ago learned to accept the inestimable gifts which the genius of Victor Hugo had to bestow, smiling as discreetly as possible at his poses and extraordinary fantasies. Thackeray did not belittle these gifts; but he laughed outright at the poet's failings. That he did so will be rather a shock to the present generation. Victor Hugo *was* not only a tremendous author, but a great man, and when we find Thackeray mockingly writing "One of the *gendarmes* not in the least knowing the tremendous author of 'Notre Dame de Paris'

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demanded his passport. Just heavens! A *gendarme* demanding the passport of Victor Hugo!" the attempt to ridicule him does to us savour of impropriety.

It was unkind of Thackeray to commence his paper with an extract from a fulsome French critic's review of the "Letters," for the quotation undoubtedly creates a prejudice. And Thackeray's allusion to Hugo's innocent little adventure with the young ladies was not happily made. As told by Hugo it makes delightful reading.* Another matter about which the Hugolâtre will want to pluck a crow with Thackeray is his statement that Hugo found that the plan of the town of Varennes was triangular like the knife of the guillotine. What Hugo really wrote was that the little *place* of the town where the flight of Louis XVI. and his family was stopped was triangular. It is curious that this remark of Hugo, which most people would pass over, stuck in Dumas' memory and led him in 1856 to go seriously into the question whether Thiers and the other historians were right in stating, as they did, that the arrest took place in the *grande place* opposite the hotel *Grand Monarque*, that is to say, in the higher town, after the bridge over the river Aire is crossed, or in the little triangular shaped *place* opposite the hotel *Bras d'Or*, as stated by Hugo. Dumas, who sometimes went in for absolute accuracy, was able to prove conclusively that Hugo was right and the historians wrong.†

* Did Hugo actually write and post his letters as he averred having done? Was 1839 the year of his visit to the Rhine, and, if it was, why in the second edition of his book does he date the letters in 1838? Hugolâtres and their opponents do not agree on these points.

† "The more ignorant of Dumas' readers caught up the current cry, for which there was slender justification, and twitted him with taking, in the most bare-faced manner, egregious liberties with historical truth in order to heighten the interest of his novels. Now I admit that he often sinned in this manner against tradition, but how many other writers—historians even—have from quite other motives distorted truth; and when Alexandre Dumas desired to be exact, he was more exact than anyone else. One occurrence in the French Revolution

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After having read Thackeray's critique on Hugo's "Rhine" nothing is more amusing than to read what Dumas wrote about it. Seventeen years later we see Dumas bounding into the kitchen of the Hotel de Metz at Sainte Menehould to find not only Hugo's famous description of it exact in every particular, but the plates and dishes, the clock and the tongs, still in the same places, and not only this but the hostess calling down a blessing from heaven on Hugo's head for the good he had done. How characteristic is Dumas' commentary!

"May the blessing of thy grateful soul cross the seas and reach the exile borne on a breath of his native air.*

"The king passed with all the royal family; we know it as a historical fact, but no one can say that his passing did them good. On the contrary the king was running away, the king was breaking his oath, the king was going to seek foreigners who would return with him to France.

"A poet passes; he is unknown to the people with whom he stops; still unknown he lets fall from his pen the description of a kitchen in a village inn; a million people read the description, henceforth no one goes by without stopping at the inn: the fortune of its hostess is made.

"Seventeen years later, in the depths of exile, the poet feels in the

which has always inspired me with the most lively curiosity is the flight to Varennes, that strange expedition, undertaken on the shortest night of the year, foolishly planned, badly carried out, and ending in utter failure almost within sight of the frontier. It has long seemed to me to be an incident of which little is known, but which is worthy of study. . . . I think I may say that few published documents, relating to this event have escaped my notice, not excepting the letter, written in invisible ink, sent by Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette through the hands of Champcenetz to Barthélemy, then the accredited minister of France to the Court of St. James. Well, of all the books which treat of the flight of the king the only one which is quite correct is the "Journey to Varennes" by Alexandre Dumas. In it he shows the most scrupulous respect for truth, he follows the fugitives stage by stage, step by step, giving a lesson in the treatment of history, which careless historians might study with advantage."—Maxime du Camp, "Literary Recollections."

* In 1859 Hugo was in exile at Guernsey.

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air which blows from France a caress as soft as the touch of an angel's wing. It is the blessing of an old woman which has reached him."

So Hugo, by travelling to the Rhine, did some good after all.

THE GERMAN IN ENGLAND.

IN the simple, kind hearted and unassuming German naturalist Thackeray found a traveller much to his liking. He was glad to notice his book, not for its own sake entirely, but because it unconsciously points a moral at other travellers more distinguished and talented, but less amiable and natural and more egotistical and presuming.

Thackeray is always at his best when describing any happy or unhappy travellers; he positively revels in their discomforts or enjoyment; are they sea-sick, he watches over them with sympathetic amusement; when recovered and drinking double stout he witnesses corks flying and froth streaming with the deepest satisfaction. In the "Kickleburys on the Rhine," *The Times* notice of which produced the caustic essay on "Thunder and Small Beer," and in the travelling scenes in "Vanity Fair" and "The Newcomes" he is at his best in describing the eccentricities of Continental travellers of all nationalities, and in the *Paris Sketch Book*, as well as in "The Book of Snobs," he lashes *Les Anglais à Paris* with genial severity.

But he has no mercy on the softer or home sick side of the Teuton character. What business had the man to leave the Fatherland who cannot accommodate himself to British malt liquors and sighs for his native lager? Nor does he feel less repulsion for the traveller who cannot bear his sufferings at sea with patience and resignation, and when dyspeptic on land not only possesses a queasy stomach but moans over it in print.

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Even his great admiration for the "Leather Stocking Tales," as declared in the "Roundabout Papers," did not blind him for a moment to the shortcomings in this respect of their author, James Fenimore Cooper.

Another American author and traveller incurred Thackeray's displeasure from much more valid causes. This is Mr. N. Parker Willis, whose principal works, "Pencillings by the Way," "Letters from Under a Bridge," &c., though readable enough and not devoid of merit, are sadly disfigured by egotism and impertinences. He is thus sketched in "Vanity Fair"—

"There was Mr. John Paul Jefferson Jones, titularly attached to the American Embassy, and correspondent of the *New York Demagogue*, who, by way of making himself agreeable to the company, asked Lady Steyne during a pause in the conversation at dinner, how his dear friend George Gaunt liked the Brazils? He and George had been most intimate at Naples and had gone up Vesuvius together. Mr. Jones wrote a full and particular account of the dinner, which appeared duly in the *Demagogue*. He mentioned the names and titles of all the guests, giving biographical sketches of the principal people. He described the persons of the ladies with great eloquence, the service of the table, the size and costume of the servants, enumerated the dishes and wines served, the ornaments of the sideboard, and the probable value of the plate. Such a dinner, he calculated, could not be dished up under fifteen or eighteen dollars per head. And he was in the habit, until very lately, of sending over *protégés* with letters of recommendation to the present Marquess of Steyne, encouraged to do so by the intimate terms on which he had lived with his dear friend, the late Lord. He was most indignant that a young and insignificant aristocrat, the Earl of Southdown, should have taken the *pas* of him on their procession to the dining room. 'Just as I was stepping up to offer my hand to a very pleasing and witty fashionable, the brilliant and exclusive Mrs. Rawdon Crawley,' he wrote, 'the young patrician interposed between me and the lady and whisked my Helen off without a word of apology. I was fain to bring up the rear with the Colonel, the lady's husband, a stout, red faced warrior who distinguished himself at Waterloo, where he had better luck than befell some of his brother redcoats at New Orleans.'"

It is unnecessary to indicate more particularly the journal above referred to, but anyone who will take the trouble to look

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at its London correspondence about the middle of last century can judge for himself whether this travesty exaggerates its general tenor. The chapter on "Literary Snobs" in the "Snobs of England," which originally appeared in *Punch*, contains the following paragraphs:—

"An intelligent foreigner's testimony about our manners is always worth having, and I think, in this respect, the work of an eminent American, Mr. N. P. Willis, is eminently valuable and impartial. In his 'History of Ernest Clay,' a crack magazine writer, the reader will get an exact account of the life of a popular man of letters in England. He is always the great lion of society.

"He takes the *pas* of dukes and earls; all the nobility crowd to see him; I forget how many baronesses and duchesses fell in love with him. Modesty forbids that we should reveal the names of the heart-broken countesses and dear marchionesses who are pining for every one of the contributors in this periodical."

Willis' "Dashes at Life" was reviewed at considerable length by Thackeray in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1845. Of this book no more need be said than that it is a farrago of absurdity, in which the author is the principal, almost the sole, male character under various aliases. He is pleasantly compared to Christopher Sly and Bottom the Weaver by the reviewer, who gives him a merciless and well deserved castigation for his vanity and presumption, little more being required for this purpose than the copious extracts which form the bulk of the review. The writer, however, cannot resist bringing in Jules Janin, his *bête-noire* of feuilleton literature.

It is pleasant to turn from this scathing criticism to the kind treatment accorded to our simple, unaffected, but, it must be confessed, somewhat prejudiced German naturalist. That gentleman's observations are most entertaining, especially the remarks on his fellow passengers. It is also interesting to note the changes involved in the whirligig of time. At that period, the smoking of tobacco, universal in Germany, was considered vulgar in England, and a man who appeared in the street wearing a moustache, and smoking a pipe, would stand a good chance of

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being cut. But a young lord who promenaded the quarter deck of a steamer towards evening blowing a cloud and attired like Mr. Mantalini when the bailiff made a descent on the show room, would now-a-days attract contemptuous astonishment, not from his *habit* but from his *costume*. Those who have read "Essays on Gormandising" will understand Thackeray's tolerance for the Gargantuan tastes of the honest German, though, as he justly says, if the traveller had the good fortune to light on a Rotterdam steamer whose breakfast was of the quality he describes, it would have been a kindness to give its name. But what shall we say of Bussy's Tavern in Water Lane, that fashionable resort where our travellers were made so comfortable? And where is Bussy? Alas, we greatly fear he has followed the footsteps of Monsieur Terré, whose demise is so feelingly recorded in "The Ballad of Bouillabaisse." And the glories of Drayton Manor have also faded away. Its hospitable owner came to an untimely end in Rotten Row eight short years after the writing of the paper which appeared in the *Foreign Quarterly*. His pictures, except those in the National collection, and his treasures of art have long since been dispersed hither and thither.

Perhaps our naturalist praises us, is praised by his reviewer a bit too highly, to the disparagement of some friends across the Channel, and perhaps there is something wanting in the critic who prefers a naturalist's impressions of travel to a poet's. The truth is that Thackeray preferred the matter of fact to the poetic when with the latter he suspected the existence of an admixture of humbug.

CELEBRATED CRIMES.

Who was Thackeray's favourite novelist? Most people seeing a strong affinity between the authors of "Barry Lyndon"

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and of "Joseph Andrews" would probably declare for Fielding. Mr. Lewis Melville* declares for Alexandre Dumas. Indeed, he says positively that Dumas was Thackeray's favourite author. Can this be? And if so, what part of Dumas' work did Thackeray specially admire? Like Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas *père* was "a tremendous author," but his "tremendousness" was chiefly in the volume and diversity of his productions. Of what section or fragment or department of the *Œuvres Complètes* is Mr. Melville thinking? for certainly Thackeray did not care for, and probably did not even know the whole of them.

It cannot have been Dumas the dramatist, that is the Dumas of 1829 to 1841 or thereabouts, of whom Thackeray was fond. So much is clear from the *Paris Sketch Book*, in which Dumas' plays, "Caligula," "Kean" and "Don Juan de Marana" are held up to public scorn. Nor can I discover any evidence that Thackeray cared for any play of Dumas whatsoever.

Was it then Dumas the young poet, the author of the "Elegy upon the death of General Foy," of "Canaris Dithyrambe," of "La Néréide, Elégie Antique," "L'Aigle Blessé," and so on? Thackeray leaves no record of having as much as heard of these; nor do I think he considered Dumas to have any claim to the title of poet.

Dumas the historian then, the author of "Gaule et France," which on its appearance in 1833 received so handsome a review in the *Foreign Quarterly*, of "Louis XIV. et son Siècle," of "Louis XV. et sa Cour," of "Louis XVI. et la Révolution"; what of him? No, Thackeray mentions none of these books.

Perhaps Dumas the traveller, the author of a whole shelf-full of "Impressions de Voyage"—"En Suisse," "Les Bords du Rhin," "De Paris à Cadix," "Le Speronare," "Le Corricolo," "Le Véloce," "En Russie," and many others? No. Thackeray good-humouredly cut up the "Travels on the Shores of the Rhine" in the *Foreign Quarterly*, and is silent respecting the rest.

* "The Life of Thackeray," by Lewis Melville.

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Then it must be the Dumas of the wondrous Memoirs, says the reader ; for surely Thackeray did not care for the Dumas "who," as the biographical dictionaries tell us, "aided by numerous assistants and forgetful of his great name, stooped to write feuilletons in the daily press in competition with Soulié and Sue." Thackeray detested Soulié and may be said to have despised Sue. Did he care for the rival romancer ?

Writing in *Fraser's Magazine* for September, 1843, Thackeray expresses an opinion that Sue in "Mathilde" had very nearly succeeded in attaining a tone of *bonne compagnie*, while Balzac was not fit for the *salon*, Dumas was about as gentle as a courier and Soulié as elegant as a *huissier*. In the same article he speaks of "Soulié, Dumas and the rest." Clearly in September, 1843, Thackeray had not yet become an admirer of Dumas, although those delightful romances "Ascanio," "Georges," and the "Chevalier d' Harmental" had already appeared. A few months later he reviews the "Excursions on the Shores of the Rhine," and writes :—

"When time shall have further softened an emphatic, bullying manner, which leads him at present to employ the largest and fiercest words in place of simple and conciliating ones ; and he shall cease to set down as armed castles all the peaceful windmills of everyday life, it is probable that we shall be indebted to him for much amusing leading . . . for he has both humour and eloquence, and in spite of his hectoring manner his heart is both manly and kind. And so, schooled down as we trust he will not fail to be, we may look forward to his writing a couple of thousand volumes even more interesting than those he has at present produced."

Thackeray's next mention of Dumas should probably be placed in 1844. He made a most amusing drawing representing Queen Elizabeth and Shakespeare sitting together after a little dinner at Greenwich. Round the sketch he wrote "An Unpublished Romance by Alexandre Dumas." And then, after describing the removal from the table of the remains of appetizing whitebait and the leaving of a pot of porter and a flask of canary, he gives an extract from "La Jeunesse

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d' Elizabeth," a romance in forty volumes. We learn that the canary was for the lady who was of ravishing beauty with red hair, like all the English, and that she was fifty-six years of age, that being, according to Dumas, the golden harvest-time of life. Dumas, after mentioning that the poet sat at the feet of the lady gazing at the navies of England, St. Paul's, the Tower, the Monument, the hills of Canterbury, and behind them the mountains of Scotland, breaks into dialogue. Shakespeare breathes his name, "William," to his fair companion, and the scene closes with her request to be called "Betsi."

The excellence of this parody of Dumas' style proves Thackeray's intimate acquaintance with his romances. And it does something more. Until Dumas wrote the "Three Musketeers," in which he introduced the Duke of Buckingham, it would scarcely have occurred to anyone that he would be at all likely to venture upon British soil in search of a hero or heroine. But his success with Buckingham made this more than likely, and the mere idea of Elizabeth and Shakespeare in Dumas' hands in this connection no doubt inspired both sketch and parody.

The "Musketeers" and the greater part of "Monte Cristo" would doubtless be accessible to Thackeray in 1844. It does begin to look as if that *annus mirabilis* had produced a change in Thackeray's feelings towards Dumas, for in 1845 we find him contributing to George Cruikshanks's "Table Book" his delightful burlesque of Dumas' "Otto the Archer," entitled "A Legend of the Rhine." In 1846, by which time Dumas had written "Vingt Ans Après," "La Reine Margot," and many other romances, is he not even under his spell? Thackeray addressed to Dumas the following open letter:—

"To the Most Noble Alexandre Dumas, Marquis de la Pailleterie, &c.

"MY LORD,

"Permit a humble literary practitioner in England, and a profound admirer of your works, to suggest a plan for increasing your already great popularity in this country. We are labouring, my lord, under a woeful dearth of novels. Fashionable novels we get, it is true; the

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admirable Mrs. Gore produces half-a-dozen or so in a season ; but one can't live upon fashionable novels alone, and the mind wearies rather with perpetual descriptions of balls at D—— house ; of fashionable doings at White's or Crocky's ; of ladies' toilettes ; of Gunter's suppers ; of déjeuners, Almacks, French cookery, French phrases and the like, which have been, time out of mind, the main ingredients of the genteel novel with us. As for historical novelists, they are, or seem to be, asleep among us. What have we had from a great and celebrated author since he gave us 'The Last of the Barons'? Nothing but a pamphlet about the water-cure, which, although it contained many novel and surprising incidents, still is far from being sufficient for a ravenous public. Again, where is Mr. James? Where is that teeming parent of romance? No tales have been advertised by him for time out of mind. From him who used to father a dozen volumes a year. . . . Where, finally, is the famous author, upon the monthly efforts of whose genius all the country was dependent? Where is the writer of 'The Tower of London,' 'Saint James,' 'Old Saint Paul's,' &c? . . . There is a lull, sir, a dearth of novelists. We live upon translations of your works ; of those of M. Eugène Sue, your illustrious *confrère*, of those of the tragic and mysterious Soulié, that master of the criminal code ; and of the ardent and youthful Paul Féval, who competes with all of them.

"I, for my part, am one of the warmest admirers of the new system which you pursue in France with so much success—of the twenty-volume novel system. I like continuations. I have read every word of 'Monte Cristo' with the deepest interest ; and was never more delighted after getting through a dozen volumes of the 'Three Musketeers,' than when M. Rolandi furnished me with another dozen of the continued history of the same heroes under the title of 'Vingt Ans Après' ; and if one could get the lives of Athos, Porthos and Aramis until they were 120 years old, I am sure we should all read them with pleasure. Here is the recess coming—the season over—no debates to read—and no novels !

"But suppose that heroes of romance, after eighty or ninety years of age, grow a thought superannuated, and are no longer fit for their former task of amusing the public ; suppose you have exhausted most of your heroes, and brought them to an age when it is best that the old gentlemen should retire ; why not, my dear sir, I suggest take up other people's heroes, and give a continuation of *their* lives.

"I have thrown together a few hints which, if you will do me the favour to cast your eyes over them, might form matter, I am sure, for

* NOTE.—Namely Dickens.

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many, many volumes of a continuation of 'Ivanhoe'; and remain, with assurance of profound consideration,

"Sir,

"Your Sincere Admirer."

In 1849 we come to proof. In that year Thackeray wrote from Paris "All the forenoon I read with intense delight a novel called 'Le Vicomte de Bragelonne,' a continuation of the famous 'Mousquetaires,' and just as interesting, keeping one panting and longing for more."

Was it in the same year that Dumas, whom he met at the house of Gudin the painter, thoroughly aroused his enthusiasm? Afterwards, in America, Thackeray said to Mr. Cooke "Dumas is charming . . . he is better than Walter Scott. I came near writing a book on the subject of 'Les Trois Mousquetaires,' and taking Monsieur d'Artagnan for my hero.* But Dumas got ahead of me—he snaps up everything. He is wonderful."

There is no doubt after this that Thackeray had completely

* NOTE.—In his essay "On a Peal of Bells," in the "Roundabout Papers," Thackeray wrote: "Of your heroic heroes, I think our friend Monseigneur Athos, Count de la Fère, is my favourite. I have read him from sunrise to sunset with the utmost contentment of mind. He has passed through how many volumes? Forty? Fifty? I wish, for my part, there were a hundred more, and would never tire of him rescuing prisoners, punishing ruffians, and running scoundrels through the midriff with his most graceful rapier. Ah! Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, you are a magnificent trio. I think I like d'Artagnan in his own memoirs best. I bought him years and years ago, price five pence, in a little parchment Cologne-printed volume, at a stall in Gray's Inn Lane. Dumas glorifies and makes a marshal of him; if I remember rightly, the original d'Artagnan was a needy adventurer who died in exile very early in Louis XIV.'s reign." Thackeray makes one or two mistakes here. The "Mémoires d'Artagnan" were not written by d'Artagnan, but by Courtils de Sandraz, the author of many similar works. The "Mémoires" were originally published in three volumes, of which it is evident that Thackeray picked up but the first, at the end of which d'Artagnan is still a needy adventurer. The fact, however, is that he was killed at the battle of Maestricht in 1673, and that both Courtils de Sandraz and Dumas merely wrote history in their own several ways.

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succumbed to Dumas' fascination, and we are not surprised when, in the "Roundabout Papers," he bursts out with "Oh, Dumas! Oh, thou brave, kind, gallant old Alexandre! I hereby offer thee homage and give thee thanks for many pleasant hours. I have read thee (being sick in bed) for thirteen hours of a happy day, and had the ladies of the house fighting for the volumes." And again elsewhere when he writes of reading Dumas' "Vingt Ans Après" with amusement from morning to sunset, and with admiration of le "Chevalier d'Harmental" and of the "Black Tulip."

After this accumulated evidence it is impossible to resist the conclusion that Mr. Melville is not far wrong—that Dumas the romancer was at least one of Thackeray's favourite authors, and it is pleasant to know, as we do know on the authority of M. Henri Blaze de Bury, that Dumas read Thackeray. If he read Chapter XIV. of "Esmond," he must have observed that he had influenced not only the minor works, but that here, in a great romance, was a scene—I mean of course the duel between Lord Mohun and Lord Castlewood—in the spirit of the "Mousquetaires."

It is to be regretted that Dumas, who was an admirer of "Adam Bede," and who prepared dramatic versions of "Hamlet" and "Jane Eyre," besides fathering translations of "Ivanhoe" and Trelawny's "Younger Son," never returned Thackeray's compliment and burlesqued one of his works. The "Yellowplush Papers," or "Major Gahagan," by Dumas, would have had a *succès fou*. Perhaps it has never been pointed out until now that the two men once did take the same subject. The first part of "Les Blancs et les Bleus" and the story of "Mary Ancel" (in the *Paris Sketch Book*) are both founded on an adventure of Charles Nodier's at Strasburg, related by him in his "Souvenirs de la Révolution."

The "Celebrated Crimes" reviewed by Thackeray were a mere instalment of an immense book, sufficient in itself to make a considerable reputation for its author. Yet Dumas'

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"*Cœuvres Complètes*" do not contain it. What other author could afford to allow his publishers to disregard such a production? "The Cenci," "Cesar Borgia," "Joan of Naples," "Urbain Grandier," "The Marchioness of Brinvilliers," "The Marchioness of Ganges," what subjects for the pen of Dumas! Thackeray, in the "Roundabout Papers," has vividly touched off the peculiar powers which Dumas displayed in writing the "Celebrated Crimes." Writing of Rubens he remarks "Better see Rubens anywhere than in a church. At the Academy, for example, where you may study him at your leisure. But at church! I would as soon ask Alexandre Dumas for a sermon. Either would paint you a martyr, done very fiercely and picturesquely—writhing muscles, flaming coal, scowling captains and executioners, swarming groups, and light, shade, colour, most dexterously brilliant or dark."

Shortly after the appearance of Thackeray's critique on the "Crimes," Messrs. Chapman & Hall issued a bowdlerized translation of the first volumes. In France, the book, which appeared in *livraisons* or parts with alluring engravings, had a great success, and was continued until eight volumes were filled. Dumas was not, of course, without assistance in the production of this book. Indeed, on the title page of the last two volumes his name is associated with those of Arnould, Fournier, Fiorentino, and Mallefille. These are the young men whom Thackeray compared to Rubens' pupils, who painted on his canvasses, and to Lawrence's assistants, who filled in his backgrounds. Thackeray owns that he himself would often have liked to have had a competent, respectable and rapid clerk for the business part of his novels, to say to him on his arrival at eleven o'clock: "'Mr. Jones, if you please, the archbishop must die this morning, in about five pages. Turn to article—dropsy (or what you will) in *Encyclopædia*. Take care there are no medical blunders in his death. Group his daughters, physicians and chaplains round him. In Wales' 'London,' letter B, third shelf, you will find an account of

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Lambeth, and some prints of the place. Colour in with local colouring. The daughter will come down and speak to her lover in his wherry at Lambeth Stairs,' &c., &c. Jones (an intelligent young man) examines the medical, historical, topographical books necessary; his chief points out to him in 'Jeremy Taylor' (fol. London MDCLV.) a few remarks such as might befit a dear old archbishop departing this life. When I come back to dress for dinner, the archbishop is dead on my table in five pages; medicine, topography, theology, all right, and Jones has gone home to his family some hours."

LETTERS FROM PARIS.

KARL FERDINAND GUTZKOW, before he visited Paris in 1842, had had a chequered career. He was born in 1811, at Berlin, where according to one account his father held a clerkship in the War Office, and according to another was an ostler in some prince's stables. Karl was educated at one of the gymnasia, afterwards proceeding to the university, where he studied theology and philosophy. While yet a student, he published a periodical which reached a circulation of seventy copies, and in 1831 was invited by Menzel, the critic, to assist in editing the *Literaturblatt* at Stuttgart. There Gutzkow became a leading spirit in the body of reformers known as "Young Germany." In 1835 he wrote "Wally, or the Fair Sceptic," in imitation of George Sand's "Lélia." Menzel attacked it, and the Government at once confiscated the book as immoral and irreligious, and imprisoned the author. While a prisoner at Mannheim he wrote a novel "Séraphine." On being released he went to Frankfort, where he married; but being obstructed by the Government in publishing his writings, he removed to

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Hamburg. It was there that he produced his tragedy "Richard Savage"—which though an extravagant, was an important work, serving as it did to initiate Germany into the modern drama—edited the *German Telegraph*, and wrote the "Life of Börne," besides producing various miscellaneous works. When he visited Paris his ideas and adventures were therefore very well known, and he must have excited some curiosity. His sojourn there was for longer than his reviewer supposed. On Gutzkow's return to Germany, after preparing a collected edition of his works, he went to Dresden, where he succeeded Tieck in the direction of the Court Theatre. It was now that he began to write the novels for which he is best remembered, viz.: "The Knights of the Spirit" and "The Magician of Rome." The success of these books, which deal with the main tendencies of Germany in his time, induced Gutzkow to found a journal which he continued till 1862. In 1864 he attempted his own life in a fit of insanity, and afterwards, although he continued to write, his powers gradually failed him. He died in 1878 from accidental suffocation from smoke. Gutzkow was a man of a bold enquiring spirit who thoroughly comprehended modern society. His works undoubtedly exercised a most powerful influence in Germany, particularly towards 1840, and this influence will perhaps be longer remembered than anything he produced.

Jules Gabriel Janin, like Gutzkow, was a journalist and a dramatist, but it may be doubted whether they had a taste in common except for pens and ink. Janin, who was born in 1804 at St. Étienne, very early betook himself to journalism. His first important work was a novel called "The Dead Ass and the Guillotined Woman" (1829), which brought him some fame, and much ridicule from English critics, who failed to understand that it was half a parody and half deliberately "romantic." In 1836 Janin became the theatrical critic of the *Journal des Débats*, and in France, where the theatre ranks as a serious study, was now a man of importance.

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"Who is Janin?"* writes Thackeray. "He is the critic of France. J. J. in fact, the man who writes a weekly *feuilleton* in the *Journal des Débats* with such indisputable brilliancy and wit, and such a happy mixture of effrontery, and honesty, and poetry, and impudence, and falsehood, and impertinence, and good feeling, that one can't fail to be charmed with the compound, and to look rather eagerly for the Monday's paper. Jules Janin is the man who, not knowing a single word of the English language, as he actually confesses in the preface, has helped to translate the "Sentimental Journey." He is the man who when he was married (in a week when news was slack no doubt) actually criticised *his own marriage ceremony*, letting all the public see the proof-sheets of his bridal, as was the custom among some ancient kings, I believe. In fact a more modest, honest, unassuming, blushing, truth-telling gentleman-like J. J. it is impossible to conceive."

Much of this is unduly severe. In truth, Janin's worst fault was his inconsistency. Dumas, whose delightful humour could be tintured with a spice of malice, brought out this defect to the admiration of the civilised world by calmly printing in some thirty numbers of his journal *Le Mousquetaire* some of Janin's opinions in parallel columns—as thus :—

No. 26.

Opinions de M. Jules Janin, sur Lélia, Indiana, et Valentine :—

Opinion du 24 March, 1834.

Indiana, Valentine, Lélia sont trois sœurs adulterines, sorties du même cerveau, engendries dans le même moment de désespoir, et plongées pour toute baptême dans le même fange, &c., &c., trois créatures identiques, *trois mauvais personnages* ne font qu'un seul et même personnage, trois femmes que l'ennui plus que l'amour a plongées dans toutes sortes de misères.

JULES JANIN.

Opinion du 20 Février, 1843.

Lélia a détruit d'un seul coup tout l'effet moral de ses sœurs *Indiana et Valentine*, &c., &c. Il y a une justice divine plus haute que la justice de tout le monde, c'est la conscience d'une personne d'un immense talent qui réglera. sans doute épouvantée, d'avoir donné à ces deux charmantes filles *Indiana et Valentine* cette sœur plus qu'adulterine, cette sœur inexplicable—Lélia.

JULES JANIN.

* "Dickens in France," *Fraser's Magazine*, March, 1842.

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But Janin wrote happily on. No one ever contributed more prefaces or supplied more texts to illustrated books than he. However, Sala filled more columns in the newspapers. Janin became a member of the Academy in 1870, and died four years later. His library was then found to contain an immense number of "Dedication-books"—inscribed to him by their authors.—*Verb. sap.*

GEORG HERWEGH'S POEMS.

THACKERAY's friend gave him a tolerably exact account of Georg Herwegh's adventures up to the date of his audience with King Frederic William IV. and the appearance of his famous letter to his Majesty in the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*. Herwegh himself was ordered to leave the country. Here, in Bowring's version, is Heine's witty, but unfair, account of the incident:—

" 'I will, as my gracious Saviour did,
Find the sight of the children pleasant;
So suffer the children to come, and first
The big one, the Swabian peasant.'

" Thus spake the monarch; the chamberlain ran,
And returned, introducing slowly
The stalwart child from Swabia's land,
Who made a reverence lowly.

" Thus spake the king: 'A Swabian art thou?
There's no disgrace in that, surely?'
'Quite right! I was born in Swabia's land,
Replied the Swabian demurely.

* * * * *

" 'One wish I will grant thee,' the monarch said.
Then the Swabian, in deep supplication,
Knelt down and exclaimed: 'O Sire, I pray grant
Their freedom once more to the nation!'

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"The monarch in deep amazement stood,
The scene was really enthralling :
With his sleeve the Swabian wiped from his eye
The tear that was well-nigh falling.

"At last said the king : ' In truth a fine dream,
Farewell, and pray learn discretion ;
And as a somnambulist plainly thou art,
Of thy person I'll give the possession

"To two trusty gendarmes, whose duty 'twill be
To see thee safe over the border—
Farewell ! I must hasten to join the parade,
The drums are beating to order.' "

All this occurred in November, 1842. About a year later Herwegh published a second volume of his "Poems of a Living Man." By most critics they are considered superior to, if not "infinitely better" than, those which were reviewed by Thackeray, but they failed to produce any great impression. Professor Brandes says—

"If these powerful poems did not greatly move men's minds, it is to be ascribed to the fact that the deficiencies of Herwegh's personal character were subtly influencing his verse. They betray themselves in a certain straining after effect, in his evident satisfaction with his own witty sallies, and in his intellectual barrenness in every domain except that of polemics. This second volume of poems is not a collection which suggests that its author has any store of ideas, of imagination, to draw upon. When we read it, we understand his life ; and his life helps us to understand this book, with which his career as a poet practically came to a close. All that he subsequently wrote, and he lived for thirty-two years longer, is contained in one small volume, published after his death. The poems of this last collection are full of wit and full of enthusiasm for liberty ; they are written—hardly four in the year—by a man who, to the day of his death, remained faithful to his revolutionary youth."

The "young, rich and handsome Berlinerinn," mentioned by Thackeray as having become "desperately enamoured of the republican bard," proved to be a most devoted wife. The happy couple lived peacefully enough for some time in Paris. At length, however, Herwegh had the opportunity of taking up

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a battle-axe and a chance of finding "the grave in the shade," which in his poems he had foreseen for himself. It was after the revolution of February, 1849, Herwegh, at the head of some German and French workmen, marched into Baden. An engagement with troops took place and Herwegh was beaten. By reason of Heine's well-known description of the conflict in "*Simplicissimus I.*," it is generally believed that the poet behaved with cowardice. But his good wife, always faithful, has written an account of what actually occurred; and after reading it no one can gainsay the fact that Herwegh, though an indiscreet leader, was a brave man. Herwegh attempted translations of some of Shakespeare's plays, but for the most part lived an idle life. He came to London, where he was one of a group of exiles, who, says Brandes, had nothing to do but to fall in love with each other's wives. Later he returned to Paris, and afterwards lived in Zurich. Always cherishing the ideas of his youth, he was dissatisfied with the progress made by Germany, attained as it was without liberty. He died in 1875.

BALZAC ON THE NEWSPAPERS OF PARIS.*

JANIN's question "With whom is M. de Balzac angry?" seems a much more cynical one to-day, when the facts of the great novelist's harassed existence have been made known, than it did in 1843. Janin managed to insinuate in putting it that Balzac's fulmination against the Paris Press had entirely

* NOTE.—Balzac's article entitled "*Monographie de la Presse Parisienne*" will be found in Vol. 2 of the "*Œuvres Diverses*," 1870-1872.

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missed the mark, while persuading the public that so far as Janin the critic was concerned, M. de Balzac had nothing to be angry about. That Balzac as a strategist did wrong to be angry is unquestionable.* That he had reason for anger against certain editors, among whom were Buloz and Girardin, and many critics, is as certain, but that he had justification for attacking the whole Paris Press and body of journalists has never been urged by his best

* NOTE.—The "Monographie de la Presse Parisienne" ended with the words "If the Press did not exist it would not be necessary to invent it." The journalists commenced fresh hostilities which were concentrated upon Balzac's play "Pamela Giraud," produced some months later. In consequence, it was as absolute a failure as was "Vautrin," produced in 1840. Madame de Girardin wittily indicated the cause in the "Lettres Parisiennes."

"The subject of all the talk this week is M. de Balzac's play. Well what do you say about it?"

"'It is abominable.'

"'It is detestable.'

"'It is execrable.'

"'It is deplorable.'

"'It is miserable.'

"'It is pitiable.'

"'It is saddening.'

"'It is disgusting.'

"'It is revolting.'

"'Have you seen it?'

"'No.'

"'And you, madame?'

"'No, I could not get a box.'

"'And you, my little one?'

"'I? Oh, that evening, dear aunt, I was at the opera.'

"'How do you know then that it was so dreadful?'

"'I read it in my journal.'

"Ah, there it is. The journals have abused it. And you believe them? You have been left in error. You do not understand why a man who has written a book against journalists is attacked by all the journals. Is it that you do not see that journals are written by journalists? Come make an effort, put these two ideas together, they will explain many things to you and you will understand eventually why a man of courageous mien is banned by the journals."

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friends. However, by a series of unfortunate occurrences, towards which his conduct may or may not have contributed, a man may be driven to anger inexplicable to those unacquainted with the circumstances, but pardonable by those who are behind the scenes. That Balzac's contemporaries were frequently much astonished and pained by his attitude towards his literary brethren frequently appears. Miss Barrett in writing to Robert Browning as late as April 5th, 1846, expressed what was pretty generally felt when she said that the very worst of Balzac was his bearing towards his literary brethren, and pointed out that although he nobly painted the genius of scientific men, that he invariably dishonoured it in the man of letters.

Suppose that Miss Barrett possessed, when she wrote to Robert Browning, the knowledge of Balzac which the Vicomte de Spoelberch de Louvenjoul has to-day, she might still think that the very worst of Balzac was his bearing toward his literary brethren.* But as to understand is to pardon, she would, I think, add some sympathetic words about this weakness of his. Balzac was not considered an enigma by his contemporaries, for every one seems to have formed an opinion about him; only, if those opinions had been collected and compared, it would have been found that they were all different, for they were all formed, not of Balzac but of particular aspects of him. The whole man, Honoré de Balzac, was something too big and grand, and too fantastic and strange for any single contemporary—except his sister—to comprehend entirely.

And not only did no one as far as I know hold the key to Balzac's real character, but not until 1842, when his works were brought together under the title "*La Comédie Humaine*,"

* NOTE.—It is pleasant to find that Balzac wrote of George Sand, "She had no littleness of soul, and none of those low jealousies which obscure so much contemporary talent. Dumas is like her on this point. George Sand is a very noble friend." See the '*Lettres à l'Étrangère*.'

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did the value of their scheme as apart from their merits as separate works dawn upon the great majority of his readers. It was only then that it was understood that Balzac was writing the history of contemporary France. Indeed Balzac's works, though many of them had very triumphant successes, were not in great continuous demand as a whole until after his death.* When that occurred, but not until then, did the Balzac "legend" begin to grow.

Thackeray's review of one of Balzac's most savage attempts to tomahawk the Parisian press will revive many interesting recollections in those who are familiar with his life: for the reason of Balzac's "anger" must be connected not with any one event, but with all the causes which together produced such desperate financial straits and such desperate attempts to reach smooth water. They will think of Balzac, the boy author of tales of blood and thunder; of Balzac, publisher and printer; of his first success with "*L'Enfant Maudit*" and "*Les Chouans*"; of his mortal combats with his editors Amédée Pichot, François Buloz and Émile de Girardin, and consequent chequered existence; of the bankruptcy of his publisher Werdet and his own pursuit by the creditors of that unfortunate man; of his failure to organize his literary friends into a sort of Mutual Benefit Society known as the *Cheval Rouge*; of his wonderful *Code Littéraire de la Société des Gens-de-Lettres*; of the perpetual alarms and excursions of Sainte-Beuve, Janin and half a score of other critics; and of a thousand other things. And as for those to whom these instances do not readily occur, they will be stimulated—or should be—to improve their knowledge of the greatest French novelist.

* NOTE.—Hetzel the well-known publisher issued ten years too soon the complete works of Balzac in a library edition and had very serious losses in connection with it. Later Houssiaux bought up this edition (composed of 17 volumes) and completed it after Balzac's death by the addition of 3 volumes. It then had a splendid sale; and is an esteemed edition still.

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It is amusing to observe that Balzac and Dumas were both "assassinated" by the redoubtable Jules Janin, but while Balzac sets that critic's attacks down to spite, Dumas wrote a spirited *causerie* to prove that he could not help making them ! *

"What, Janin a critic ! Come now, Janin, the author of the 'Dead Donkey and the Guillotined Woman' ; Janin, the author of the 'Men of Toulouse.' What the dickens makes you think that Janin is a critic ?

"Well, on Mondays he gives a critical summary of the plays of the last week, doesn't he ?

"Yes, but you ought to study the delightful anecdotages which Janin calls criticisms more attentively and you will see that he takes the titles of the plays that have been performed either at the operas or the Theatre Français or at the Porte-Saint-Martin or elsewhere merely to give him a pretext for writing in his own particular style.

"And it is quite true, as you say, that Janin is the master not the slave of his style. When you meet Janin one evening at 11 o'clock in the theatre corridor moved and even shaken by what he has just seen and heard, ask him what he thinks of the play which has stirred him to the heart and he will tell you 'It's splendid, it's magnificent, it's sublime.' And it really seems so to him ; for one has to know Janin to understand all the spontaneity and heartiness of this big and witty child. He will shake your hand and say, 'If you meet the author, my dear fellow, tell him that he has produced a masterpiece.'

"Delighted, you hasten to the author and tell him what Janin has said. The author can hardly believe you. His 'No ?' his 'Really ?' his 'Good !' succeed each other as trembling from the strain of the first performance they break from him in the wake of the just vanished critic. He impatiently awaits Monday's paper—the *Journal des Débats*—and says in confidence to his friends, 'You must look out Janin's article ; he is delighted with my play.' Sunday seems to him to have forty-eight hours ; at last Monday comes. Thrice happy Monday which shall see his triumph. He rings for his man if he has one ; he calls for his housekeeper if he has no man servant—or for his maid of all work if he has no housekeeper.

"Go and get me the *Journal des Débats*.'

"But it's only six o'clock, sir.'

"Go all the same ; get it whatever you give for it, whether three pence, six pence or a shilling. Go and be quick !'

"The man, the housekeeper or the maid of all work goes and is

* "Causeries," by A. Dum .

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away ten minutes, quarter of an hour, half an hour and comes back at last with the thrice blessed paper.

"Ah! here it is. Quick! hand it here."

"The wrapper is torn off, the paper opened. At the tenth word the reader rubs his eyes, at the twentieth line he lets the paper fall.

"What's the matter?"

"The matter is that Janin damns the play and annihilates the author.

"And why? Is it a case of treason, a broken promise, an organised plot to run him down. No, it's nothing of that sort.

"It is simply that Janin has taken off his boots, has got into his dressing gown, has sat down in his armchair, has drawn it to his desk and has taken up his pen with the positive intention of praising the play; but the first line instead of taking the right turn has swerved to the left; Janin has followed the first line; Janin's wheel has been set going and it must go on; he must in fact say the wrong thing because he wanted to say the right—but you are not to suppose that he wanted to do this! This delightful dreamer is not a free agent. He is in the power of every chance, of his cat playing with a spool of thread, of his parrot who says 'Pretty Polly,' of his dog who runs off barking with his slippers.

"Another time when you have written a poor play if his first line turns to the right instead of to the left, you may be quite happy, he will say as much good of the bad piece as he said harm of the good one and you will be Quits."

ENGLISH HISTORY AND CHARACTER ON THE FRENCH STAGE.

ONE of the most entertaining essays in the *Paris Sketch Book* is that on French dramas and melodramas. Nothing indeed could be more ludicrous than the account given by Thackeray of such pieces as "Don Juan de Marana" and "Kean," unless it be the picture which he at the same time unconsciously presented, of his Britannic self seated in front of the footlights trying in vain to understand what it was that so much delighted the rest of the audiences. To him the

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wit seemed vulgar, the incidents coarse or absurd, the sentiment false, and the plays immoral; while the ignorance displayed, when there was question of the history, manners and customs of his native land, was to him simply shocking. French audiences on the other hand found the wit exquisite, the incidents dramatic, the sentiment such as frequently necessitated the use of pocket-handkerchiefs, and the pieces generally moral and improving. Had Thackeray's essay appeared in the Paris press, it would probably have been considered by many readers as a mere *jeu d'esprit*, the proper place for which would have been the *Charivari*. If Thackeray had insisted that the critique was seriously intended, many a Frenchman would have asked, could a critic from the Chinese empire have stranger notions about our barbarian plays than their English critic, separated from us but by two hours of salt water?

"Don Juan de Marana" and "Kean" were not only highly successful when produced, but they have stood the test of revival. "Kean" indeed is always treated by French critics with the greatest respect; the fact is that if Dumas' many mistakes in English history and manners are excused—it is of course difficult for an Englishman to overlook them—it is seen that "Kean" is really, from the standpoint of the theatre, an excellent play. This, however, never occurred to Thackeray. His whole attention was directed to the "Frenchiness" of the piece, and to the singular mistakes in it. For instance, one of the scenes takes place at a tavern on the banks of the Thames called "le Coal-hole" and chosen by *Lord Melbourne* as a rendezvous for a gang of thieves, who are to have their ship in waiting in order to carry off a young lady of whom his lordship is enamoured! To the end of his life Thackeray remembered this scene, and indeed was never tired of alluding to its absurdity. It is true that in the "Roundabout Papers" he acknowledged that it was of no use being squeamish about the probabilities and possibilities in the writing of fiction. An extraordinary event had then recently occurred in

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Northumberland Street—a scene and catastrophe more strange and terrible than even “the brave Dumas, the intrepid Ainsworth, the terrible Eugene Sue” could have invented. Thackeray, in recalling his merriment over the Coal-hole Tavern with the fleet of pirate ships moored alongside, wrote : “Pirate ships ! why not ? what a cavern of terror was this in Northumberland Street, with its splendid furniture covered with dust, its empty bottles, in the midst of which sits the grim ‘agent,’ aiming (with a pistol) at the head of his customers !” And we may be sure that to the end of *his* life Dumas remembered the “Coal-hole” scene, considering it, dramatically at all events, not the worst he had devised.

But if Thackeray was not, and I think he was not, a very good or just critic of French plays, when they dealt with life in England, his ironic humour enabled him to furnish copy which, exceedingly entertaining when it originally appeared, is far more so to-day, when the reader has learnt to know so well the man who wrote it. Dumas’ “Causeries” owe half their charm to their author’s personality. Paris readers were entertained by them from day to day and from year to year, precisely because they knew beforehand what Dumas would say about his pets, his dinners, his plays, and his friends. The comment was “That’s Dumas all over.” Now the *Paris Sketch Book* is Thackeray all over ; but in 1840 his personality was unknown, and the book was a failure. In the last years of his life the “Roundabout Papers,” which are of similar quality much mellowed, had a great success, for the reason that the public had by that time learnt to know the man who held the pen. In “French Dramas and Melodramas” Thackeray seems much disposed to pity himself for having been obliged to witness so many plays, for having, as it were, been the accessory to so many murders, rapes, adulteries, and other crimes, and yet in this essay we find him relating his experiences at half-a-dozen other plays, confessing to being a constant attendant at the theatres of Paris for some years after the publication

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of the *Paris Sketch Book*. In 1843 Scribe and Dumas were still dispensing morals and amusement to the public. Only Scribe had given up peopling the stages of the Gymnase and Variétés with gay colonels, smart widows and silly husbands, and had betaken himself to the Français, becoming in the process, Thackeray considered, a professor of English history. Dumas on the other hand, who when Thackeray first made the acquaintance of his plays, wrote in his Satanic, or at least Byronic vein, had discovered that he had wit, and had transferred himself from the Français to the Variétés, much to the horror of Thackeray, who little imagined how versatile a genius Dumas was to prove himself.

The reader has had, in the "Letters from Paris," an excellent sketch of Eugène Scribe from the pen of Jules Janin. Here is a tribute to his popularity from Théophile Gautier: "For fifteen years he has kept afloat all the theatres of Paris, of the suburbs, of the provinces, of Europe, of the entire world. The first thing that a traveller hears in the theatre in a foreign country is a phrase of M. Scribe terminating in *o* or *a* according to the country. Be certain that in Timbuctoo there are at present actors rehearsing a vaudeville of M. Scribe and that a young negress of Damanhour is studying before her mirror of polished copper the affected rôles of Madame Léontine Volays. The Papuans of the South Sea where they play society comedies, always choose the 'Marriage of Reason' or 'Michel and Christine.' The Chinese themselves with figures like two-handled pots and faces like the paintings on folding screens, translate and perform upon their bamboo theatres the vaudevilles of M. Scribe, which our professors of Chinese retranslate into French and palm upon us as compositions of the time of the Hang or Hing dynasty. In Spain, which is almost as far off as China, M. Scribe has dethroned Lope de Vega, whose fecundity, with the aid of his collaborators, Scribe has surpassed."

And Gautier goes on to ascribe the enormous success of

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Scribe to the fact of his not possessing the least spark of poetry—a great advantage to a dramatist whose necessity it is to please the philistines.

It was unlucky that Thackeray, who was sufficiently a philistine to be well entertained by the "Bear and the Pacha" or any other of Scribe's hundred vaudevilles, chanced to come in for the performances of "A Glass of Water" and the "Son of Cromwell." In writing these comedies Scribe had no idea of transforming himself into a professor of English history, as Thackeray puts it. For historic accuracy, or indeed for local colour, Scribe cared nothing. His idea once found, his ingenious mind could develop it to any extent, while his stock of characters, all ready made, seldom needed any addition. To wind up and set them dancing was for Scribe an easy task. Having once given the public a taste for the peculiar Scribe flavouring it was waste of time or worse to try anything different. The ideas worked up by Scribe were frequently very clever and were often his own. Sometimes, however, he borrowed them, and in giving an account of "A Chain" Thackeray might have remarked that its subject was taken and watered down from Dumas' powerful play "Angèle."

If Thackeray was unfavourably impressed by Scribe's ancient history as dished up in the "Glass of Water" and the "Son of Cromwell," he was horrified by the more modern history of Frédéric Soulié. It would appear that Thackeray was accustomed to attack Soulié's novels, the *mœurs légères* of which were peculiarly distasteful to him. Thackeray hints that had not Soulié been on the staff of the *Journal des Débats*, and therefore a prominent writer, he would have left his play unnoticed; but I think that Soulié's original notions about the English were too attractive to him to be passed over. "Gaetan, Il Mammone" in fact abounds with happy strokes of national character. Here again, however, Thackeray's national prepossessions prevented him from enjoying what was after all not a bad play. At all events it was successful enough

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in Paris, where Soulié was rightly considered to have much dramatic talent.

When Thackeray saw "Halifax" he seems to have been quite unprepared for Dumas' translation to the Variétés, and his surprise may to some extent have prevented him from enjoying the prologue to the piece. This prologue is admirable and cannot even be read without enjoyment. Dumas, on the occasion of the last rehearsal of the play (which is by no means one of his best) addressing the actors, said "*Mes enfants*, the piece is not a good one; a prologue to it is absolutely necessary. Are you up to learning your parts in one between this and to-morrow? If so, I am going to write it." The proposition was accepted and the prologue was written, learnt and performed in twenty-four hours.*

Our critic's withering notice of Léon Gozlan's "Right Hand and the Left" was obviously influenced by the idea that the play in its first shape contained allusions to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. It must be said that Thackeray was badly inspired when he wrote that Gozlan was utterly devoid of inventive power and quite incapable of embellishing a story or giving it point. Few writers have possessed more brilliance and sparkle than Gozlan, whose articles were for years so great a feature in the lighter Parisian papers, whose short tales are in their way unsurpassed, and whose "*Médecin de Pecq*" and "*Notaire de Chantilly*" gained for him permanent fame.

It is strange to find that after condemning the plays of Scribe, of Dumas, of Soulié, and of Gozlan, Thackeray is subjugated by the charms of Madame Ancelot, a writer whose name has scarcely come down to the present generation. But if there was little to admire in "The Two Empresses," there was nothing to which an Englishman could object. As Thackeray said, "If we are to have nonsense about history, let us have it at least in an agreeable shape." The other dramatists, it must be

* "Alexandre Dumas," by H. Blaze de Bury.

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confessed, did not try to be agreeable, at least to a foreign critic.

"In "Robert Macaire" Thackeray finds a theme entirely suitable to him, and it is interesting to note how his style brightens when he reaches it. He had already written about Macaire in the *Paris Sketch Book*.* The sketch of Macaire, with his heart of steel, his conscience seared as if with a hot iron, his face radiant with mirth, his step elastic and his tongue dropping pleasantries too oily to be caustic, is precisely the Macaire drawn by Henley and Stevenson. Did tradition alone inspire them?

THE MYSTERIES OF PARIS.

THACKERAY on Sue! The author of "Vanity Fair" on the author of the "Mysteries of Paris"!

Eugène Sue, the fashionable writer *par excellence* in the Paris of the forties, made his appearance in London in weekly numbers. Our elders still recollect the fascination in stationers' windows of the horrific woodcuts on the outer pages, and the gazer's dreadful impotence to turn the leaf and read the story. Where are those weekly numbers now and where the fame of Eugène Sue? Is he not chiefly remembered for his eccentricities of style and taste, and best beloved for the material for caricature that he afforded to the immortal Cham? And yet Sue had very real, if very disordered ability. "Mathilde" and the "Mysteries of Paris," in widely different ways, are remarkable books. Thackeray, in his amusing critique, frankly takes the ground taken by the average Britisher, who reads excitedly to the end of the last new novel and, having pished and pshawed and thrown it down, turns to

* See "Caricatures and Lithography in Paris."

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abuse the person who brought "such rubbish" into the house. The "Mysteries of Paris," long since discredited as a study or even as a romance of "the people" and more than ever impossible in the present day, which possesses such books as "No. 5, John Street," "Tales of Mean Streets," and "Demos," can in fact only lay claim to the merit of having interested and amused thousands of readers of its author's generation. Thackeray, though he saw no intrinsic value whatever in the book, yet undisguisedly admired and perhaps envied its *entrain* and its author's power of enslaving his readers and forcing them, willy-nilly, to read his countless volumes.

In 1843 Thackeray had few readers save for his magazine articles; he clearly saw that it was of no use writing if no one read, and the feat of capturing practically all the readers in the world at one stroke as Sue had done was one to appeal to him as a writer, if not as a critic. In his "History of the Next French Revolution," which he contributed to *Punch* in 1844, Thackeray turns to account Sue's extraordinary popularity and represents the frivolous Parisians as so fascinated with a new feuilleton by him "that they did not care in the least for the *vacarme* without the walls" of the city which was being fired at by twenty-four forts simultaneously.

To Sue as an author Thackeray did little or no injustice, but he would have spared the *man* some of his sarcasms about "Three Francs a Line" had he known the circumstances in which the book was written and published.

Eugène Sue was about thirty-eight when his lawyer forced upon his comprehension the fact that his remaining fortune consisted of 15,000 francs and that he owed 130,000 francs. His fashionable friends deserted him, and he felt himself unequal to carrying any further his novel "Arthur," two instalments only of which had appeared in *la Presse*.* Fortunately

* Frédéric Soulié, author of the "Mémoires du Diable," was the inventor of the long romance in six, eight or ten vols. Sue soon imitated him.

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he still had one friend—Goubaux, who had collaborated with Dumas in the play of “Richard Darlington.” Goubaux gave him the excellent advice to put himself into the book—to describe his own sorrows. Sue did so and completed “Arthur” in three months, receiving a handsome sum for it. From that moment Goubaux became his counsellor in all his literary undertakings. Goubaux frequently urged upon Eugène the fact that as yet he had only studied the upper classes of society and had ignored the town class—the urban proletariat. Sue, at length; not seeing whither he would be led, bought one day an old blouse covered with paint stains, a cap, a pair of clumsy shoes, and canvas trousers; put on these things, soiled his hands and went to dine in a *cabaret* in the Rue aux Fèves. Fortune favoured him. He was present at a serious affray. The participants in this affray gave him the types of Fleur-de-Marie and le Chourineur. He returned home and wrote the first two chapters of the “Mysteries of Paris,” as he had written the first two chapters of “Arthur,” that is, without any plan. Then he wrote a third chapter and sent for Goubaux, who found the first two chapters excellent; the third, however, was thrown into the fire. The friends then discussed the material for some further chapters and agreed that a romance of this description could not be issued in serial form and that Sue should offer it to a publisher who had asked for “*un livre inédit*.” Sue then treated with the publisher, and it was agreed that the romance should be in two volumes and should not run in a newspaper. A fortnight later the publisher received the first volume and sold its serial rights to the *Journal des Débats*. From its first appearance the “Mysteries of Paris” was a great success, four volumes were agreed on instead of two, then six, then eight, then ten.

“To this fact,” says Alexandre Dumas, from whose study on Eugène Sue I take these particulars,* “is attributable the

* “Causeries,” by A. Dumas. Sainte-Beuve declares in his “Portraits Littéraires” that Sue, having written in his romance

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languor and weakness of the last four volumes, the changes in the characterisation and the numerous notes which were designed to cover too startling contradictions, as for example that of Fleur-de-Marie, prostitute in the first chapter and virgin and martyr in the last, and a canoness! ”*

“Everyone read the book,” says Théophile Gautier, “even those who did not know how to read and who made some friendly and learned hall-porter read it aloud to them,† people the most apart from any sort of literature knew the Goualeuse, the Chourineur, the Chouette, Tortillard, and the Maître d’Ecole. All French people occupied themselves for upwards of a year with the adventures of Prince Rodolphe before attending to their own business. Sick people waited for the end of the ‘Mystères

“Cecil” some scenes which proved too strong meat for the public taste, flavoured the whole with a spice of philanthropy; that this proving successful, he took the hint and worked it out in the “Mysteries of Paris.”

* Did Ruskin read *the whole* of the “Mysteries of Paris”? In “Modern Painters,” vol. III., part iv., chapter xvii., note to s. 27, I find the following:—

“Compare the characters of Fleur-de-Marie and Rigolette in the “Mystères de Paris.” I know no other instance in which the two tempers are so exquisitely delineated and opposed. Read carefully the beautiful pastoral in the 8th chap. of Part I., where Fleur-de-Marie is first taken into the fields under Montmartre and compare it with the 6th of Part II., its accurately traced companion-sketch, noting carefully Rigolette’s ‘Non, je déteste la campagne.’ She does not, however, dislike flowers or birds: ‘Cette caisse de bois que Rigolette appelait le jardin de ses oiseaux était remplie de terre recouverte de mousse pendant l’hiver. Elle travaillait auprès de la fenêtre ouverte, à demi voilée par un verdoyant rideau de pois de senteur roses, de capucines oranges, de volubilis bleus et blancs.’”

† Compare this with the story of the charwoman who could not read but was thoroughly acquainted with “Dombey.” “It turned out that she lodged at a snuff shop where there were several other lodgers, and that on the first Monday of every month there was a tea, and the landlord read the month’s number of ‘Dombey,’ those only of the lodgers who subscribed to the tea partaking of that luxury, but all having the benefit of the reading.”—Forster’s “Life of Dickens.”

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de Paris' before dying, the magic words 'Continued to-morrow' carried them on from day to day, and Death understood that they would not be easy in the other world unless they knew the *dénouement* of this strange tale."

Moreover, in spite of all its defects, the book aroused in the upper classes of French society much sympathy for the poor, a sympathy which Sue himself eventually shared. His publishers, for the time at least, secured practically all the profits produced by the book; however, not only was Sue's reputation as an author established but he was acclaimed by a section of the French press as a great social reformer. Henceforth most of his books were imbued with socialism.

Shortly after the appearance of Thackeray's article upon "The Mysteries of Paris" in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, its publishers brought out a new and splendid edition of this book. On the next page is their advertisement, than which nothing could better testify to the popularity of Eugène Sue in this country.

Of course, Messrs. Chapman and Hall were not Sue's only English publishers. Others sought to excite and terrify, if not to touch and refine, the British public, and did so to some purpose, in spite of the employment of translators who while forced to translate, salved their consciences by appending footnotes.* Here are two, extracted from a translation of "Martin the Foundling," or the "Valet de Chambre" as the story is sometimes called:—

"The ludicrous allusion just now to the electric glance from Regina's eyes, the scandalous misuse of the word Providence, and indeed the whole of this chapter until Martin revives from his self-inflicted but partial starvation, disgusts me beyond measure, and I take this opportunity of requesting the reader to believe that the alloy which he will sometimes discover in this and other writings of this able advocate of the poor and industrious classes is fully as distasteful to me as to himself."

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

* The long piece of translation in Thackeray's essay on "The Mysteries of Paris" appears to be from his own pen.

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And again :—

“ There is no use in mincing the matter, Monsieur Sue, Martin *did* succumb on that occasion ; the fact of the honest coachman having found him half dead, and restoring him to life and to the means of living does not destroy the other fact—the faintness of heart with which Martin *lay down to die* in the suburban cellar. The position of our hero, before he resolved to kill himself by starvation, was far less cruel than that of Mark Tapley in ‘ Martin Chuzzlewit,’ when he was smitten with the fever in the horrid swamps of the back settlement ; and yet the honest fellow did not give way even there, when all his vigour of body was exhausted ; the first word he utters when he partially recovers is the word ‘ Jolly !’ I have insisted the longer on this point because it is one of *character* between the two nations, and because the whole body of French literature, since the present romantic school was founded by Victor Hugo, Dumas, Soulié, Eugène Sue, and others, is infected with the unmanly and ungodly idea of suicide being a justifiable act ; and as these sections of ‘ Martin, the Valet de Chambre,’ pass weekly through the columns of the *London Journal*, which is read by a QUARTER OF A MILLION OF PEOPLE, it would be supremely unjust to them as to me and the other contributors to that periodical, to let it be supposed that a belief so utterly at variance with English principles is not an opinion which we all deplore.”

TRANSLATOR’S NOTE.

The “ Quarter of a Million People ” who read “ Martin the Foundling,” “ Mathilde,” and “ The Wandering Jew,” in weekly numbers may or may not have “ deplored ” as they went along, but for the time being Eugène Sue was a name to conquer with. His success encouraged in France Paul Féval, masquerading as Sir Francis Trollope, to write “ The Mysteries of London,” and G. W. M. Reynolds in England to pen still further “ Mysteries,” and yet more “ Mysteries ” still in a sequel. In 1844 Dumas was asked to write something which would compete with “ The Mysteries of Paris ” in popularity. In answer to the demand he wrote “ Monte Cristo.” The first part, which, as everyone knows, is closely connected with the Château d’If, was translated somewhat too literally into “ The Castle of If.” Henceforward Dumas not only successfully rivalled Sue as a *feuilletonist*, but found a permanent popularity

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among readers of a superior stamp. For years, however, translations of Dumas' romances continued to be issued in numbers like Sue's, with illustrations "in the first style of art." Nor did Dumas escape the annotations of *his* translators, one of whom had the temerity to remark after a delightful description of a combat in the "Bastard of Mauléon,"

"The very conception of such manœuvring in a combat of cavalry is perfectly ridiculous."

TRANSLATOR.

But what did the translator know of cavalry, one ventures to enquire.

It is interesting to compare the style of Thackeray's critique of the "Mysteries of Paris," written in 1843, with that of an article contributed by him ten years before to *Fraser's Magazine*, and entitled "Half-a-Crown's Worth of Cheap Knowledge." Take the last sentence of the critique, which runs as follows:—

"By way of encouraging the romance reader it may be stated in conclusion that the *Débats* has just commenced a new series of this interminable story, in which horrors more horrible, scoundrels more profound, thieves, knaves, and murderers, still more thievish, knavish, and murderous, than any to whom we have yet been introduced, are made to figure on the scene."

And the last sentence in the contribution to *Fraser* :

"'This Town,' the 'Penny Age,' the 'Fly,' and the 'Shew-up Chronicle,' contain a vast deal of matter to which we have not alluded and which we assuredly shall not describe. Suffice it to say that ribaldry so infamous, obscenity so impudently blackguard and brazen, can hardly be conceived and certainly never was printed in our day."

Thackeray did not fail to bear Eugène Sue in mind, for in July, 1845, we find him writing to the editor of the *Edinburgh Review* offering to write an article concerning him.

"Eugène Sue has written a very great number of novels—beginning with maritime novels in the Satanic style, so to speak, full of murder and crime of every description. He met in his early works with no very great success. He gave up the indecencies of language and

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astonished the world with 'Mathilde' three years since, which had the singular quality among French novels of containing no improprieties of expression. To my mind it is one of the most immoral books in the world.* 'The Mysteries of Paris' followed, with still

* The review of "Mathilde" in the *Foreign Quarterly Review* for 1842 is probably from Thackeray's pen. It opens as follows:—

"It would be difficult to find a collection of incidents more unnatural, or a set of characters more exaggerated, than those which compose the 'Mathilde' of Monsieur Sue. And yet it has been the most popular book of the season, the most universally read, and not undeservedly so: for it interests, and has a foundation of truth and spirit at the bottom of its extravagances, which draws the reader on from volume to volume.

"We understood that the French had grown tired of their extravagant school; that the distortions of Hugo and Balzac had palled upon the public taste; that 'Hans of Iceland' and 'Bug Jargal' no longer inspired horror, but *ennui*; and that, in commercial phrase, there was a demand for the natural and simple. Madame Dudevant at first promised to satisfy this taste, and it was one of the secrets of her early success. But Madame Dudevant unfortunately gave herself to philosophical studies and speculations upon human life, which removed her ninety degrees from any thing like nature. The misty spectacles she put on distorted all objects fully as much as the green vision of either Balzac or Hugo. Then came Charles de Bernard as the type of the natural school, and clever and successful he proved. But in the end his condiment was found not full-flavoured enough for French palates, and all run back to Monsieur Eugène Sue's catering.

"The true secret of 'Mathilde's' success, however, is the story coming so home to every French female. Their life begins at the moment when their prudent relatives betroth or sell them to a mortal possessing the requisite qualifications for a husband. Of old, ladies were not unwisely nurtured in convents, awaiting the time of sacrifice, with curiosity and *espéglerie* unrepressed perhaps, but still unsophisticated, and unspoiled by a full sight and inspection of the world, as is now the case. The young lady is not, indeed, allowed the use of her tongue and of free intercourse; but she has eyes and ears, and is allowed the full liberty of judgment, if not of choice. Then, however close may be drawn the curtains of the French nursery, the prevalent ideas, the moral atmosphere which reigns and prevails without, penetrate in some degree within, and coming upon the simplicity of youth beget strange effervescence. The last century in France was corrupt enough: but there was a world of light and a world of

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greater success, and the same extreme cleverness of construction and the same sham virtue. It has been sold by tens of thousands in London in various shapes, in American editions, and illustrated English translations. The book just translated is an old performance, it is called 'Latreumont' in the French original."

Had Thackeray made a similar proposition a little later, that is to say after the appearance of Sue's "Wandering Jew" in the *Family Herald*, where it had an enormous success, the editor would have been well advised to accept from his pen a critique upon it, for it could scarcely have failed to be characteristic and entertaining.

FRENCH ROMANCERS ON ENGLAND.

THACKERAY'S survey of the result of the invention of the feuilleton, when in the forties the day was not sufficiently long to read the portions of Balzac, George Sand, Dumas,

darkness—purity, strictness, religion in the one; the very contrary existing or affected in the other. Now there are no such compartments. Good and ill in persons, in sentiments, in things, are intermingled, as veins in marble, past tracing or separating. And there is no retreat from pleasure to devotion. The young female is no longer intrusted to the priest and the convent; but is allowed to form her own code of morality, her own tissue of sentiment, which in generous minds is of course romantic.

"There is, hence, a great tendency in France towards exchanging the matter-of-fact simplicity, which hitherto marked the young French damsel, for a degree of sensibility and sentimentalism which surpasses even the English standard. The work at present under review is written to meet this taste. It has a Grandisonian hero, and a heroine very unlike one of Balzac, or Madame Sand: a virtuous, high-minded, self-denying female. Hitherto the female sex has been caricatured by French romancers. M. Sue's portrait of his heroine at least is more like the truth of the time. And the fury with which it is snatched up and read, shows that it has started a vein of nature yet unexplored."

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Reybaud, Sue and Soulié served up by the journals, recalls to mind the expedient resorted to by the Government of 1847 to make money out of the system.

Of this Dumas gives a most amusing account.* He says, that the happy days of the *feuilleton* were the unhappy days of politics. The journals were simultaneously publishing "The Mysteries of Paris" of Sue, the "General Confession" of Soulié, "Monte Cristo," "The Chevalier de Maison Rouge" and "The Women's War" of Dumas. The politicians of the day created little or no interest, and instead of reading the discourses of Thiers and of Guizot, of Odilon Barrot, of Berryer, of Molé, and of Duchâtel, people read the fiction of Messrs. Balzac, Sand, Dumas, Reybaud, Sue and Soulié. But suddenly Louis Philippe was overthrown, and the noise he made in falling distracted attention from the novelists.

Their turn soon came again. Lamartine, Ledru Rollin, Cavaignac, and Prince Louis Napoleon were found less amusing than the *feuilletonists*. So popular were they that some of them were elected as deputies. One day a politician, adroitly profiting by the fact that the Chamber was in a bad humour with the literary men who were sitting there—Hugo, Felix Pyat, Sue and others—rose to speak. He said that the *feuilleton* was the reason why Ravaillac had murdered Henri IV., why Louis XIII. had murdered the Marshal d'Ancre, why Louis XIV. had murdered Fouquet, why d'Amiens had murdered Louis XV. why Napoleon had murdered the Duc d'Enghien, why Louvel had murdered the Duc de Berri, why Fieschi had murdered Louis Philippe, and why M. de Praslin had murdered his wife. He added that all acts of adultery that were committed, that all tumults that arose, that all thefts that were accomplished, were caused by the *feuilletons*; that it was only necessary to suppress the *feuilleton*, or to tax it, for the world to stop, and

* See the introduction to "La Comtesse de Charny."

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instead of continuing its way to destruction, to retrograde to the age of gold, which it could not fail to reach some day, provided that it rolled back as far as it had rolled forward. The majority of the Chamber agreed with the speaker, and it was decided to tax the newspapers which published the accursed things. A half-penny was therefore imposed on each copy of such newspapers; so that supposing one to have a circulation of 40,000 copies, four hundred francs would have to be paid daily on the score of the *feuilleton*, or about double what the author received for writing it. The consequence was that "*feuilletons romans*" ceased to appear in the papers, and that "*feuilletons histoire*" were published instead. Accordingly all the romancers were asked to write history. Dumas was actually invited to write a history of the Palais Royal, and a history of the crimes of the Popes, and Émile de Girardin wrote him the following letter:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND.

I desire that '*Ange Pitou*' may be completed in a further half-volume, instead of in six volumes—in ten chapters instead of a hundred."

It resulted from this that Girardin, instead of publishing six volumes of a romance, on which he would have had to pay duty, published twenty volumes of Dumas' "*Memoirs*." There were people sufficiently uncharitable to say that the "*Memoirs*" contained as much fiction as the romance would have done; but de Girardin kept his readers while he saved the duty.

When Thackeray criticized "*Le Bananier*" the *feuilletonists* were yet unchecked, and Melchior Frédéric Soulié was the most indefatigable of all of them. According to Mme. de Girardin it was the fault of the ladies that he wrote stories of a sensational order. She says that his early works, which were of a mild and chaste nature, were left unread, and that it was not until in desperation he wrote down to their tastes and produced "*The Magnetizer*" that he became popular.

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Soulié was one of those men who seem to be born with a pen between their fingers. At school, on being given a kind of fable to compose, he put it into verse. His teacher found this so surprising that he dismissed the boy from the class, accusing him of presenting as his own work lines stolen from some miscellany. Soulié complained to his father, who knew that his son from the age of twelve had been accustomed to make verses. Soulié *père* called on the schoolmaster, who answered that it was impossible that a schoolboy should make French verses. "But," said the father, "you require this schoolboy to make Latin verses." "Oh, that is different," was the reply; "I taught him to do that, and besides he has the 'Gradus ad Parnassum.'"

In spite of his facility Soulié found poetry so unremunerative that he connected himself with an undertaking for supplying builders with window frames, but in 1827 he succeeded in getting his "Roméo et Juliette" unanimously accepted by the committee of the Théâtre Français. Unfortunately other writers were busy with the same subject, and the committee ultimately considering that a translation of Shakespeare's play might be better than an adaptation produced one by Emile Deschamps. Soulié took his piece to the Odéon, where it was received, performed, and applauded. His next piece, "Christine," was a dismal failure, and he then took to journalism, working with Balzac and Sue. In 1832, he was at length successful, for "Clotilde" made him one of the most popular dramatists of the day. His first stories achieved no popular success, but "The Magnetizer," "The Two Corpses," and the famous "Devil's Memoirs" placed him for a time in front of every competitor. Success induced him to overstrain his talent, and before his premature death in 1847 his reputation had suffered by the production of manifestly inferior works.

Soulié's talent was chiefly of a dramatic order. He had great power, but not much *finesse*. His best books cannot

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easily be put down ; but, when once laid aside, they soon pass from the mind.*

It is only fair to Soulié to say that "Le Bananier," which was obviously written to the order of a political journal, is not a fair specimen of his work. The book is now utterly forgotten, while Dumas' "Georges, or the Isle of France," which also deals with the slave question, is deservedly popular still.

NEW ACCOUNTS OF PARIS.

THACKERAY can seldom have had a more thoroughly congenial task than that of reviewing the sprightly "Parisian

* Lovers of Dickens who are unacquainted with the "Devil's Memoirs" (published towards 1840) may be interested to compare the following fine passage from Chapter I., vol. 5, of the Brussels edition, with the description of the wind in Chapter II. of "Chuzzlewit" (published in 1843).

"Comme une troupe de cavaliers aériens lancée au galop, le vent passait tout d'un trait à travers ces arbres et ces haies, criant, hurlant et emportant avec lui des nuées de feuilles qui semblaient dans la nuit un vol d'oiseaux fuyant à tire d'aile. Puis tout à coup, comme si ces escadrons invisibles en eussent rencontré de plus puissants, ils s'arrêtaient et paraissaient se briser : on les entendait reculer et revenir par rafales inégales et plaintives ; les feuilles dispersées repassaient en tourbillonnant, et s'abattaient çà et là sur la terre humide, pareilles à une bande de passereaux qu'ont dispersée et décimée les plombs éparpillés d'un coup de fusil. Alors tous les grands bruits se taisaient un moment pour laisser entendre le murmure de la pluie tombant sur les arbres, le cri lugubre d'une chouette et le chant lointain d'un coq. L'orage reprenait ensuite, allant, venant, luttant, frappant de grands coup sourds et poussant des sifflements aigus : non pas un de ces orages bouillants et superbes que sillonnent de puissants éclairs, qui parlent majestueusement par de grands éclats de foudre, qui jettent dans l'âme une sainte terreur pleine d'admiration, auxquels on s'expose, tête nue, pour s'imprégner de leurs chaudes émanations et respirer leur atmosphère électrique ; mais un de ces noirs orages qui serrent le corps de froid et le cœur de tristesse, un de ces orages auxquels on ferme soigneusement sa fenêtre et sa porte pour s'accoter au coin de l'âtre qui brûle, ou se rouler dans les couvertures de son lit."

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Letters" of Delphine Corinne de Girardin, the daughter of Sophie Gay and the wife of the well-known proprietor of *La Presse*, Émile de Girardin.

The editor chose his critic well, when he sent that little pile of volumes to Titmarsh. Of course the "Parisian Letters" were not all new to Thackeray, for he must have read many of them in *la Presse*, where for several years before they had gradually appeared with so much success.

That he knew the fair author at all well may be questioned, for I think that her friends were not deceived, as Thackeray seems to have been, by the mask worn by her to fit the part of the well-informed but somewhat frivolous and very worldly Vicomte de Launay.

She certainly played the part admirably, but the woman who wrote "*La Joie fait Peur*" and "*Napoline*" was more than a De Launay. That acute observer Sainte Beuve somewhat regrets that Delphine Gay the poet became Madame de Girardin the journalist, and quotes a passage from "*Napoline*" which will convince most readers that its author at one time at least possessed the soul of a poet and not that of a clever worldling.

"The tedium of life lulls genius to sleep and does not destroy it, but the world! . . . the world! . . . it makes us like itself; it unceasingly pursues us with its irony, it reaches the heart, its incredulity envelopes, its frivolity dries us up; it throws its cold glance upon our enthusiasm and it extinguishes it, it drags forth our illusions one by one and it disperses them, it robs us and when it sees us miserable like itself, made in its own image, disenchanted, withered, without heart, without virtue, without belief, without passion and cold as death itself, it places us among the elect and says to us with pride, 'You belong to us!'"

Thackeray notices that Balzac and the critic Jules Janin were already at fisticuffs in 1836 about "Woman." Janin's article reproaching Balzac with having discovered the woman of forty and calling him her Christopher Columbus is worth quotation.

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"The woman of from thirty to forty," wrote Janin, "was formerly a region which did not exist for passion and was therefore unknown to the novel and the drama. But now, thanks to these diverting discoveries, the woman of forty reigns without a rival in both novel and drama. This time the new world has eclipsed the old, the woman of forty outshines the maiden of sixteen.

" 'Who's that knocking?' cries Drama in a gruff voice.

" 'Who's there?' asks Romance in flute-like tones.

" 'It is I,' answers trembling sixteen with teeth like pearls, snowy bosom, delicately curved form, fresh smile, and gentle expression; 'it is I. I am the age of Racine's Junie, of Shakspeare's Desdemona, of Molière's Agnès, of Voltaire's Zaire, of Prévost's Manon Lescaut, of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's Virginie. Mine is the age—the fleeting, magic age of all the heroines of Ariosto and Lesage, of Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott. I am youth, still hopeful and simple, fearfully questioning the future with a glance as clear as the blue sky. Mine is the age of all pure affections, of all noble instincts, the age of pride and innocence. Let me in, I beg!'

"So speaks sweet sixteen to novelists and dramatists, and the novelists and dramatists reply, 'Go away, child, your mother and we are very busy; come again in twenty years and perhaps we shall be able to attend to you.'

Madame de Girardin continued to write the "Paris Letters of the Vicomte de Launay" until 1848. She died in 1855.

James Grant, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, author of "Random Recollections of the Lords and Commons," "The Great Metropolis," and of thirty-four other works, was one of Thackeray's aversions. Grant received many shrewd digs from the Thackerayan pen. If any of them made him wince, it may have been the following in *Punch* :—

"THE LAST INSULT TO POOR OLD IRELAND.*

"It is confidently reported that the author of 'The Great Metropolis' is going to write a book about this most unfortunate country."

"Paris and its People" roused Thackeray so much that besides ridiculing it in *Punch* on several occasions he reviewed

* *Punch*, September 7th, 1844.

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it twice over. He wrote from the Travellers Club on November 4th, 1843* :—

“It is needless to state to any gent in the upper circles of society that the eyes of Europe have long been directed towards Grant. All the diplomatic gents at this haunt of the aristocracy have been on the look-out for his book. The question which Don Manuel Godoy addresses to Field-Marshal Blücher (before they sit down to whist) is in the Spanish language of course, ‘When will it appear?’ ‘Prxhpssky, Grantowitz bulbxwky!’ exclaims his Excellency, Count Pozzo di Borgo, before taking his daily glass of caviare and water, ‘that terrible fellow Grant is going to publish a work about Paris, I see.’ ‘Quand sera-t-il-dehors?’ screams Prince Talleyrand, ‘When will it be out?’ and on the day of publication I know for a fact that a carrier was waiting at the French embassy to carry off the volumes to His M—t—y L—is Ph—l—ppe, and Monsieur G—zot. They have seen by this time—they have read every word of those remarkable tomes, and I have no doubt that they are trembling in their *souliers* at some of the discoveries therein made.”

Apart from Thackeray’s peculiar aversion to “James” (as in the article above quoted he persists in calling that talented writer James Grant) he was very anxious that French people should be under no illusion regarding him, and is at pains in the *Foreign Quarterly* to make it perfectly plain why it was of importance to notice the book there. Thackeray well knew that *Fraser* (in the December number of which he crushed him with brilliant sarcasms) had but a small foreign circulation, while the *Foreign Quarterly* was to be found in every capital in Europe. The reviewer of Alfred Michiels’ “Angleterre” felt thoroughly ashamed of his countryman. He certainly did his best to pillory both authors and prevent their works from doing any serious mischief either at home or abroad.

ANGLETERRE.

THE ingenious author of “Angleterre,” a gentleman of Dutch origin who was born in 1813, must have felt exceedingly

* *Fraser*, December, 1843.

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flattered at being honoured with such a long review as Thackeray gave him. No doubt it helped the sale of his book considerably; and it is not to be doubted that in the pious hope of getting another notice or two, he caused all his other works to be sent to the *Review* as long as it continued to appear.

Unquestionably, "Angleterre" was a successful book. It not only went through three editions in the forties, but was re-issued in handsome form as late as 1872 under the title "*Voyage d'Un Amateur en Angleterre*," with a new preface and supplements. Michiels bravely stuck to it that he *did* see "Angleterre," and headed his new preface thus:—

"All that I saw returns upon my view,
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,
All that I felt this moment doth renew."

—WORDSWORTH.

His success in placing a book written in 1842 with a new publisher thirty years later very naturally gave him confidence in its continued longevity. He says in his preface, "A lonely monument by the side of the waves, beaten upon by the tempest and overgrown with wild plants, has for poetic souls an eternal charm. When this volume is only a ruin, I hope that there will be found in it the melancholy attraction that exists in nature and abandoned buildings." And he explains that he wrote the book almost in spite of himself. "Leaving for England without any other intention than that of seeing a country whose literature I loved and of which I thoroughly knew the language and somewhat the history, far from wishing to relate my travels in an island so often explored, I had the firm intention not to scribble a word about it, having all my life abhorred '*les lieux communs*.' On arrival I was surprised at the new things that I saw, at the multitudinous remarks that the monuments, the people and books suggested to me. I experienced a sort of exaltation which suffused everything with a soft and marvellous light. On my return to Paris, memory

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prolonged this poetic emotion and inspired me with the desire to take up my pen. An article published in a review having been received with great favour, I wrote a second, then a third, and eventually all my narrative was completed."

In spite or perhaps on account of these asseverations, I think that Thackeray was right and that Michiels only saw as much of England as was reflected in the eyes of someone who had been there. He was an industrious as well as an ingenious fellow, this Joseph Alfred Xavier Michiels, if even though he did not run the risk of sea sickness or the perils of inland travel, but seated comfortably at the Bibliothèque Nationale, he produced the whole shelf-full of books which bear his name. And even Michiels considered that there were limits to the credulity of his countrymen, for in advertising them, I notice, he felt constrained to classify a work entitled "Captain Firmin, or Negro Life in Africa," and another on chamois-hunting, as "Works of Imagination." Other books include a "History of Flemish Art," "Studies on Germany," "A History of Literary Ideas in France," "The Secret History of the Austrian Government," "A History of Austrian Politics since Maria Theresa," "Austria and the Polish Question," "The Rights of France in Alsace-Lorraine," "A History of the Franco-German War," as well as various books such as the "Nouveau Péch  Originel," whose titles suggest a lighter vein.

On one occasion Michiels had a great opportunity, and he seized it. In 1846 Ars ne Houssaye produced in a splendid folio volume illustrated with fine engravings, a "History of Flemish and Dutch Art," which had a great success among collectors. Hardly had the book appeared when Michiels, who had the year before produced his "History of Flemish and Dutch Art," published at Brussels, publicly and vehemently accused Ars ne Houssaye of having stolen from and plagiarized his work. He published under the pseudonym of Jules Perrier a pamphlet entitled "An Undertaker of Literature," in which he accumulated his woes and stated his facts. Houssaye replied

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to this pamphlet by a paper entitled "A Literary Martyr, Touching Revelations," taking a tone half serious, half jesting, where he justified himself with some success. This brought forward a second pamphlet from Michiels, still more outspoken than the first, and signed with the same pseudonym, called the "*Nouvelles Fourberies de Scapin*." The affair, which made much noise at the time, did no harm to either of the writers; strangely enough the sale of their books was considerably increased by the warfare. *

* Georges d'Heilley's "Dictionnaire des Pseudonymes."

THE END.

